

MUSICAL ENGLAND



W. J. GALLOWAY

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BY

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PREFACE

SOME years ago I put forward a statement of the case for the establishment of Opera upon a national basis in this country, along with a short account of the conditions under which it is produced in France, Germany and Italy. Much water has passed under the bridge since then, and, though the operatic problem is still unsolved, the art of music has made enormous strides in the interval. The knowledge and appreciation of it have spread in a manner at once so surprising and so satisfactory, that I have thought it worth while to collect some evidence of the progress that has been made. Whether my effort has been proportionately worth the making I must leave my readers to judge. The facts speak for themselves: and if they point, as I believe, towards a proper and adequate recognition of an important art by the State, my efforts in the relation of them will not have been in vain.

In the preparation of the book I have received more courteous and kind assistance than I can possibly acknowledge. I must, however, thank Miss A. M. Wakefield and Mr. T. Walter Hall for information and advice on definite points, and Dr. A. J. Greenish and Mr. J. W. Ivimey for much aid in the furtherance of my general scheme. In addition I must record my obligations to Mr. H. B. Dickin, to whom I cannot sufficiently express my thanks for the valuable help he has given me in collecting and collating the facts set out in these pages. But it must be observed that neither Mr. Dickin nor any one else who has helped me is in any way responsible for the views and opinions I have expressed. For them I alone am responsible, and all the blame for their shortcomings must fall on my head.

W. J. G.

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MUSICAL ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

Recent growth of musical knowledge—National opera and State support—Native composers and their claims to recognition—Camillo Cavour's tribute to music.

THE interest I have felt for many years past in the promotion of music in this country was long centred on the question of the establishment of National Opera. This question has provoked a great deal of spasmodic discussion, and many schemes have been ventilated in the public press and elsewhere; but so far no definite steps have been taken towards the realisation of the cause. Accordingly I began this book in the hope that I might once more assist the efforts of those who are working for a very desirable object, by basing my deductions, not so much on what is done under different conditions abroad, as on the constantly increasing

enthusiasm for music to be noticed at home. It is unquestionable that the only stable foundation for a national enterprise is the existence of a wide and interested public. But the existence of such a public for opera can only be proved by the test of actual experience; and in London, at least, whence the influence of a national scheme would presumably radiate, the hitherto intermittent application of the test has not yet produced conclusive results. It seemed to me, however, that it would be perfectly possible to indicate the amount of popular support to be relied upon in other fields of musical activity, and to draw from this a legitimate inference as to the probable attitude of the nation towards the provision of opera at popular prices. For there is no special mystery which bars the uninitiated from the enjoyment of this particular form of art. On the contrary, as the interest is heightened and the meaning illuminated by dramatic and scenic aid, the appeal of opera should be more readily intelligible than that of the more abstract forms of music.

The aim originally proposed in the preparation of the following pages was to review briefly the various ways in which the interest of the public is attracted to music, and to

argue that the responsiveness of the nation to other forms indicated a corresponding readiness to listen to opera. This design was subsequently modified. Some traces of it remain in the prominence I have given to the question of operatic training in the metropolitan music schools, and, more justifiably perhaps, in the chapter especially devoted to opera. But, as my enquiries proceeded, it seemed to me that the state of music in England to-day pointed to a conclusion comprehending more even than the establishment of national opera, and that the outlook was full of promise, if only the whole field of music, rather than one neglected corner of it, could be officially recognised.

The scheme of the book in its ultimate form, then, is to show to those, who do not realise it, what is being done all over the country in the cause of music ; to point out here and there possible fields for improvement and extension ; to indicate, in some sort, the progress of the last five-and-twenty years ; and above all to show how readily the great majority of the people respond to the opportunities provided. The last named is the essential point ; for if, as I believe, it can be demonstrated that the public as a whole is really appreciative of worthy musical enterprise, not only is the

greatest obstacle to national opera removed, but the strongest possible case is made out for a degree of intervention on the part of the State that could not be expected in the interests of a small minority. If, on the other hand, there is no sound basis of popular support to be relied upon, the case for national opera will fall to the ground and the need for State intervention will lapse until a musical public has been built up in gradual stages from the bottom. But the latter hypothesis is absolutely untenable. It would leave the success of new ventures and the continuance of old ones in the position of inexplicable phenomena, and offer no explanation, other than the unsatisfactory theory of spontaneous generation, for the existence of a vital and significant school of British composers.

I have given special prominence to the competitive movement, not only for the reasons to be found in the chapter devoted to it, nor even because there is a large section of the public—especially in the south of England—which does not in the least realise the extent of its influence, but largely because it affords a splendid means of furthering the two most significant factors in the musical development of to-day—that is to say, opera in English

and the British school of composition, to which a reference has just been made. The case for opera in English is not disregarded in the following pages, but in the matter of modern British music they may be considered defective, for they contain little reference to the vexed question of how much encouragement native composers may reasonably expect.

It has been argued on the one side that they may expect very little and do not deserve much, and, on the other, that, whatever their deserts, it would do more good than harm to the cause of British music, if they received the fullest recognition the press and public could bestow. Composers themselves have naturally inclined to the latter view. Quite recently one of them complained in the press of the neglect of British music, especially in the test pieces set by the Associated Board of the Royal Academy and the Royal College of Music. One can easily sympathise with his feelings, while failing to understand the *naïveté* that prompted their expression. The number of Englishmen on the Board is more than double the number of foreigners, and the sympathies of the latter with the land of their adoption may be reckoned strong enough to remove them beyond all feeling of prejudice. Possibly

little harm, if not considerable good, would come from the inclusion of more native works in the Board's syllabus; but when thirteen musicians, of whom nine are Englishmen, select foreign and native test pieces in the proportion of twelve to one, it is only reasonable to conclude that they have good grounds for their decision, and that English composers have either failed in their achievements or neglected a suitable opening for profitable activity.

Undoubtedly native effort has suffered from a long period of neglect, and it has been inevitable in music, as in other fields of enterprise, that the work of the pioneers should fail to secure due recognition. But there is at least a danger that the pendulum should swing too far; there is something parochial, if not arrogant, in a demand for a more or less exclusive patronage of native effort. Like all others, the question resolves itself largely into one of supply and demand; and though there have been other causes at work in the past, a readjustment is certainly taking place with the spread of musical knowledge all over the country. For this improvement the competitive movement is largely responsible, since it is rapidly creating a public whose performances are dictated not by fashion,

but by knowledge and the power of discrimination it brings.

Meanwhile the claims of native composers are invalidated by two causes. In the first place, they do not—I refer to the lesser lights, if it be permissible to hint at their existence—supply the music for which there is a definite demand; and in the second place, they suffer the inevitable penalty attaching to creative work—their art is not an exotic which can be forced. Such support as they have had in the past and are still receiving in the present has, however, depended too much on individual enterprise. It has lacked the stability and permanence of official sanction. The disabilities they have consequently suffered under have pressed with even greater weight on native performers, in whose case no possibility of deferred or posthumous fame can atone for present neglect. But taste is changing, and the mass of the public no longer looks on native musicians with suspicion. Hence we may hope and believe the time to be at hand when the State will give an adequate amount of support to music, an amount proportionate, perhaps equal, to that which is bestowed in other fields of art and science.

This is the case I wish to argue—the claim of

music to State recognition. The facts I have brought together in support of the claim make no pretence to completeness. Most of them, of course, will be perfectly familiar to professional musicians. Nevertheless I hope I may enlist their sympathy for an honest endeavour to present a convincing case to the large and increasing section of the public which takes an interest in music. Possibly I may even appeal to those who care nothing for music in itself, but recognise in it a field of activity with great and constantly widening possibilities. For the words of Camillo Cavour, words spoken at a time when music in Italy was entering on evil days, apply, with some possible modification but no little cogency, to the musical outlook in England to-day. "I do not understand," he said, "a note of music, and could not distinguish between a drum and a violin; but I understand very well that the art of music is not only a source of glory, but also the primary cause of an enormous commerce, which has ramifications in the whole world. I believe, therefore, that it is the duty of the Government to help so important an industry."

CHAPTER II

MUSIC IN THE SCHOOLS

The Universities and their position in relation to musical activity—Modern requirements for degrees—The Birmingham scheme and the imposition of practical tests—Degrees and Diplomas—The Metropolitan Schools of Music : Trinity College of Music, The Royal Academy, The Royal College, The Guildhall School of Music—Their work in opera—The Patron's Fund—Music in Secondary Schools—The Board of Education's recommendation as to singing classes—The London County Council—Training Colleges and teachers' qualifications—The standard in the schools : tone, sight-reading, breathing and articulation—The choice of music—Evening Continuation Schools—District Choral Unions—Lack of instrumentalists, especially wind players—Small orchestral classes and efficiency.

AFTER what has been said about beginning at the bottom, it is natural to open an enquiry into English musical activity with a brief survey of the place of music in modern education, or, perhaps it would be better to say, of modern education in music. As a matter of fact, the two aspects of the case are somewhat hard to separate, for the enquiry must deal with institutions designed expressly to promote the study of music and

with others in which music plays, incidentally as it were, a more or less important part.

THE UNIVERSITIES.—As these institutions are not in any sense co-ordinated, it is impossible to trace a continuous, progressive line from one to the other in the way in which such a line may be traced from the preparatory to the secondary school and thence to the university. There is consequently nothing to be gained here in working upwards from the bottom; and indeed it is more convenient to begin at the top with the Universities. Of course there is a sense in which the large musical training-schools are themselves universities. They grant diplomas, and at least one of them, the Royal College, has the power to grant degrees. But as these institutions will be considered later, the term “university” is to be understood here in its ordinary meaning.

Musically considered, the Universities, the older ones at any rate, occupy a rather isolated position. The extent of their influence is limited by the fact that they stand outside the field of general musical activity, and do not dictate to the schools in this branch of study as they do in others. To a very considerable extent the curriculum of a public school is regulated by University requirements, as edu-

cationists desirous of substituting the latest methods of scientific training for Greek or Latin Verse have before now discovered. In many respects, therefore, the influence of the Universities is paramount in secondary education. But this is not the case with music, because the older Universities are content for the most part to examine, without systematically teaching, musicians. Hence students of the great metropolitan training-schools seek their diplomas in the places that have given them their practical qualifications. Only a few of them, in special circumstances, graduate in music at Oxford or Cambridge ; and among the majority there exists a decided feeling of antagonism to the academic standpoint.

The reason for this is not hard to find. Music does not hold, and never has held, its rightful place at the Universities. It is true that chairs of music have existed for generations, but systematic instruction has not been given, such instruction, that is, as enables the student to dispense with the aid of a private coach. The fault does not lie with the Universities, but with the public, which has long refused to take music seriously, with the State, which declines to endow it, and with the schools, which are only just beginning to afford it a small measure

of the recognition that it may fitly claim. Consequently, being perforce content to examine those whose knowledge has been gained elsewhere, the Universities have naturally left the question of practical efficiency to take care of itself.

Again, in times of progress, examination standards need constant revision. But Universities are proverbially conservative, and it is natural that examinations, however wisely devised and directed, should tend to become tests of mechanical accuracy. Indeed it is difficult for them to be anything else : so that latterly as the creative side of music has advanced in this country, there has grown up an increasing tendency to sneer at such efforts as can be conveniently covered by the term "academic."

But with the wider awakening of musical life, and perhaps also from the close connection between University Professors and the metropolitan schools, there has arisen a vigorous desire to raise the standard of University requirements. The lead was taken many years ago by the University of Dublin, which was the first to demand literary qualifications from graduates in music—a wise step, but too small a one to secure by itself any very marked advance in the status of musicians.

A much more pregnant and hopeful change was inaugurated when Cambridge, guided by Sir C. V. Stanford, revised its requirements and demanded residence as a necessary qualification for degrees in music as in other faculties. It is true that the change has not been fruitful in results, except perhaps in driving a certain number of candidates elsewhere. But it is a step in the proper direction, since it is not right for music to be rated so low that musical degrees can be obtained without the qualifications considered necessary in other branches of learning. Moreover, the change may lead the way to a new state of things in which the older Universities will become practical schools of music, and Colleges will offer scholarships and award fellowships for musical proficiency.

Meanwhile the principle of residence, with definite courses of instruction, has been adopted at Manchester, Edinburgh, and Birmingham; and these three Universities, as well as the Royal University of Ireland, also impose practical tests on candidates, who must prove themselves proficient in playing the organ, the pianoforte, or an orchestral instrument, or (in the case of Edinburgh) in singing. Every candidate for the Edinburgh doctorate is further

examined in the history of his instrument and the best means of teaching its use.

With these reforms there has come another of great importance—the demand for artistic merit and definite creative ability in the much maligned exercises. The regulations at Oxford expressly state that “no exercise will be passed on its freedom from technical errors.” Similar demands are made at Durham, London, and Manchester, while Cambridge has abolished the exercise (except for the new degree of Master of Music), substituting a paper in composition for would-be bachelors, and demanding from candidates for the doctorate not less than three works showing artistic conception and inventive power; one of these works must be an opera, oratorio, cantata, symphony, concerto, or extended piece of chamber music, the inclusion of an opera being especially significant. It is further to be noticed that, where the exercise is retained, there is a general tendency to demand that some part of it at least should be modern in treatment.

To these signs of a desire to bring the Universities into line with recent musical development should be added the admission of women to degrees at London, Manchester, and the Royal University of Ireland.

Finally, some detailed reference must be made to the requirements in force at Birmingham, for they are distinctly progressive and at present not very widely known. The regulations for the doctorate are not yet available, but candidates for the degree of Mus. Bac. are provided with regular courses of study extending over three years. They are examined on these, as well as in acoustics and in harmony and counterpoint up to eight parts. They are required to have a detailed knowledge of musical history, of the organ, the pianoforte, and the orchestra, of orchestration, of choral music from Palestrina to the present day, of the symphony from Haydn to Elgar, and of the opera from Mozart to Debussy. They must have a thorough critical knowledge of works as diverse as Bach's *B minor Mass*, Wagner's *Tristan*, and Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*, and they must pass a practical test and score an exercise for full orchestra. With such requirements in force successful graduates of Birmingham will be exempt from the reproach of being either antiquated or academic.

The imposition of a practical test is more important than any widening of theoretical requirements. It is alone sufficient to cause a revolution in musical qualifications, the true

nature of which has been little understood hitherto by the general public. Most people who are not practical musicians attach an exaggerated value to these degrees, and consequently musicians in general—outside certain classes—have gone to the other extreme and unfairly underrated them. One cannot conceive, for instance, of a pianist or a violinist attempting to increase the drawing power of an advertised recital by the addition after his name of the title “Mus. Doc.” It is equally impossible to imagine an orchestral player seeking an engagement on the plea of being a Mus. Bac. The claim would be considered—not quite justly, if added to sufficient technical qualifications—as ridiculous, and a fair guess could be made as to the manner of its reception.

But for a young musician intending to be a church organist or a secondary-school music master the possession of a degree is practically a *sine qua non*. For the music master the reason is intelligible: his colleagues will hold degrees, and he will lose caste among them unless he is similarly qualified. In the case of church organists the reason is less obvious, for the degree has long implied no technical proficiency whatever. Yet, without

doubt, a Mus. Bac. stands a better chance of an appointment than the holder of a mere diploma granted for technical skill: partly because the clergy—who should know better—like him to wear a university hood; partly because the sound of “Mus. Bac.” carries with it an implication of respectability and impresses the congregation; but mainly, I believe, because there exist together in the minds of uninstructed churchwardens a commercial desire to get the best value for the money they administer and a lamentable lack of information as to the criteria they adopt in selection.

I dwell upon this point because it is one on which the public at large needs instruction. In the first place, it is ignorant of the real value of alphabetical addenda and unduly exaggerates the value of a degree as compared with that of a diploma: in the second place, knowing little about the matter, it attaches a fictitious importance to all combinations of letters advertising distinctions.

The first point is illustrated and paralleled by that analogous confusion of ideas which, in the case of medicine, has given rise to the wholesale illogical use of the word “doctor”; but whereas it is open to the whole of the medical profession to attract the more dis-

cerning patients by the addition of M.D. over and above the qualifying diploma, it is only a restricted class of musicians who are allowed, through capricious and irrational prejudices, a similar chance of increasing their commercial value ; and this is clearly absurd and unfair.

As to the second point, the chief evils caused by the ignorance of the public are no doubt the "bogus" degree and the proprietary college, which continue to flourish in spite of repeated exposures. But there are other absurdities directly traceable to the modern mania for efficiency as tested and certified by examinations ; and I quote, as one typical instance for which I can vouch, the case of an organist whose signature to the weekly service list is adorned by letters representing one degree and three diplomas. Admittedly he deserved his appointment, not only for his skill, but also for his enterprise. But the state of things, which imposed such a tax on his patience and his pocket and impelled him to enter for at least three examinations presumably covering the same ground, is clearly ridiculous. A practical trial would have been more appropriate as a test of his ability. But as selection by practical tests and common sense is an ideal not soon to be realised, those

Universities which widen their requirements in practical directions are to be congratulated on their wisdom.

THE SCHOOLS OF MUSIC.—For the sake of brevity, it is fortunate that a review of the work done by the musical training-schools of England may achieve a reasonably satisfactory estimate of their influence without touching on such of them as are situated in the provinces. Not that the work of these latter is unimportant, but that in the most prominent cases—such as the Birmingham Institute and School of Music—it is closely bound up with the efforts of the local University. It is therefore permissible to pass them over and concentrate attention on those metropolitan schools which stand out by reason of their size and wide sphere of usefulness. These are the Royal Academy, the Royal College, and the Guildhall School of Music; and in connection with them it is necessary to mention Trinity College, which is similar in aim, though slightly smaller in the number of its pupils.

Trinity College of Music is specially to be commended for the spirit of enterprise that underlies its examinations, as also for the fact that it was the first school of music to institute any practical tests of this nature. The

examinations of the College are now held in London and the provinces, in India and the Colonies, and there are two distinctive points about them which call for notice. A preliminary examination in Arts is compulsory for those who seek diplomas in the theory and practice of Composition ; and no Teacher's diploma is granted unless the candidate has satisfied the examiners in a paper on the Art of Teaching as applied to Music, a subject in which the College provides a definite course of instruction.

Of the larger schools the Royal Academy stands first in point of seniority, for it was founded in 1822. All branches of music are provided for in its curriculum, and all students are required to be taught harmony. This is a wise provision ; but it is one thing to teach and quite another to make pupils assimilate knowledge. It is unfortunately true (and especially in the case of young singers), that many students refuse to acknowledge the wisdom of this regulation. They regard harmony as merely subsidiary, and fail to recognise its essential value to those whose aim should be the acquisition of power to learn extensive works with speed and thoroughness.

The original prospectus of the Royal Acad-

emy sets forward as the aim of the Institution the desire to enable native musicians to compete on equal terms with foreigners. Unfortunately a similar object still forms a large part of the programme of this as of other schools. But the open expression of such an aim, coupled with the facts that singing was originally considered the most important branch of study, and that all students were at first required to learn Italian, sufficiently indicates the state of music in England in the early years of the Academy's existence. The Academy offers fifty-nine scholarships and exhibitions and thirty-four prizes. At the present time it has about 500 students, of whom about 150 pass out every year. A considerable number of these regard music as a luxury; but of those who look upon it as a means of livelihood, the majority obtain posts through the unofficial agency of the institution.

The Royal College of Music, with more scholarships and exhibitions but fewer prizes, has a slightly smaller number of students than its rival. It is equally successful in finding posts unofficially for those of its pupils to whom music is the serious business of life. It was founded in 1883 largely through the exertions of the present King, whose influence

was responsible for much of the powerful support and patronage the College originally received. But for the continuance of that support and for the high position it now holds the College may justly point to its sincere aims and long list of successful achievements. The regulations in force are so similar to those of the Royal Academy that there is no point in setting them out in detail.

The Guildhall School of Music is slightly older than the Royal College, having been founded by the Corporation of London in 1880. It is the only metropolitan school of music municipally supported, and it differs from its rivals also in the fact that it now appeals principally to amateurs—a development not contemplated at its foundation. From its position in the City and the admission of evening tuition into its time-table, it is especially useful to business people of both sexes who desire competent, but not professional, training in the branch of musical study which attracts them. The regulations are therefore less strict here than elsewhere: there is no minimum course in point of time, nor are pupils constrained to take up the study of harmony. There are no obstacles to the gratification of individual taste, and induce-

ments are offered in scholarships and prizes to the annual value of more than £850.

The influence of the three chief metropolitan schools is not to be estimated by their output of professional musicians. Their effectiveness in raising the standard of performance and appreciation among cultivated and enthusiastic amateurs is just as important, if not more so. Yet if, as is probably the case, their primary object is to train professionals rather than amateurs, it is surprising that among all the scholarships and prizes they offer there is scarcely one that is adequate to support life during the years of training. In this respect much remains to be done for the really indigent student, since the lack of large scholarships places an insurmountable barrier before a considerable amount of talent that would be well worth exploiting. Meanwhile, the three schools that have been noticed attract between them some three thousand pupils; and the work of each institution derives increased efficiency from the powerful stimulus of the other two: so that their importance as a factor in the situation of to-day cannot be overlooked. That there has been a surprising musical renaissance in this country is not to be denied; and though its causes may not be easily determinable, one

at least must be the existence during the last twenty-five years of three efficient and powerful training-schools in the metropolis. It is unnecessary to consider in detail their work and influence, but their activity in the field of opera requires some special notice.

The Royal Academy has been active in the cause of opera since its inception. It was the wish of its founder, Lord Burghersh, to connect the school with the Royal Italian Opera, and in consequence the students began to give performances of opera as far back as 1828. Acting and elocution are now included as special subjects of study, and in the last ten years about sixty operas have been given in part or in whole. The list includes Bizet's *Carmen*; Flotow's *Martha*; Gluck's *Orpheus*; Gounod's *Faust* and *Philémon et Baucis*; Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, *Magic Flute*, *Figaro*, and *Don Juan*; Rossini's *Barber of Seville*; Ambroise Thomas's *Mignon*; Verdi's *Aïda*, *Falstaff*, and *Un ballo in Maschera*; Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* and *Lohengrin*; and Weber's *Der Freischütz*.

The operas already given at annual performances by the students of the Royal College are: Beethoven's *Fidelio*; Cherubini's *Les Deux Journées*; Cornelius's *Barber of Bagdad*;

Delibes's *Le Roi l'a dit*; Gluck's *Alcestis*, *Orpheus*, and *Iphigenia in Tauris*; Goetz's *Francesca* and *The Taming of the Shrew*; Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*; Mozart's *Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *Don Juan*, and *Magic Flute*; Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*; Purcell's *Dido and Æneas*; Schumann's *Geno-veva*; Stanford's *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Shamus O'Brien*; Verdi's *Falstaff*; Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*; and Weber's *Eury-anthe* and *Der Freischütz*.

The Guildhall School of Music, which has unique opportunities in the possession of its own theatre, has mounted the following in addition to many others, of which some appear in the previous lists: Auber's *Fra Diavolo*; Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*; Gluck's *Iphigenia in Tauris*; Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*; Hérold's *Le Pré aux Clercs*; Mes-sager's *La Basoche*; and Goring Thomas's *Esmeralda*.

These lists are imposing enough, and contain many works seldom, if ever, heard elsewhere, but it must be remembered that the performances have been spread over a number of years. All that the average student can hope for is to take part in one or two operas with their preliminary rehearsals, an amount

of training insufficient to enable him to approach an operatic manager with confidence.

Still, it is greatly to the credit of the metropolitan schools that at the present moment they all have ex-pupils doing well in grand and light opera. But they might have many more equally successful if they paid more attention to operatic study. They cannot give the voice, still less the personality and physique, required by an operatic artist ; but they can do more than is attempted at present to give a practical knowledge of stage-craft, and in voice training they can direct their methods to opera as well as to oratorio. Perhaps it is as well that they should do this and at the same time enlarge the scope of their operatic classes, hold more rehearsals and give more performances ; for the better their students are equipped the nearer will be the prospect of a well-established National Opera.

But such activity is costly, and it is unfair to blame the schools for not doing more when the prospects are the reverse of encouraging. Already, as Sir C. V. Stanford has pointed out, the lack of a National Opera has caused a serious decline in the numbers of the male students. In all probability the numbers of the women students, who at present stand to

the men in the proportion of three or four to one, will presently decline and the schools be left to the amateurs. This will be a serious blow to the growth of musical activity, but it is almost inevitable in the absence of that institution which would be the natural goal of the well-equipped and promising student.

How much is done unofficially by the schools in advancing their old pupils in life has already been hinted at. It remains to notice briefly the only direct method by which these institutions are able to aid young musicians of promise.

The Patron's Fund was founded by Mr. Ernest Palmer at a cost of £27,000. It was originally intended for the pupils of the Royal College, but its scope has been extended by the college authorities, and its benefits are now open to all young musicians, provided only that they are British subjects. Thus at the last concert supported by the Patron's Fund the Royal Academy and the Guildhall School of Music were represented, the former by an orchestral work, the latter by an executant; and of the four grants made by the Fund in 1909 two went to the Royal College, one to the Royal Academy, and one to the Guildhall.

The income of the Fund is devoted to the performance of new British works ; the introduction of British executive artists ; the provision of travelling scholarships and special grants to students ; and the publication of new works and the furtherance of deserving enterprises. Twelve concerts have been given and eighty-five works brought forward.

The Patron's Fund has a further sphere of utility. Many works sent in are only judged unfit for public representation after a private performance. Thus some proportion of the rejected candidates—those at least whose works are sufficiently meritorious to survive a preliminary test—gain valuable experience by hearing their music adequately rehearsed, a solid advantage of greater importance than the satisfaction of a public hearing. The young composers, whose works have been given in public, include representatives of the Royal Normal College, the Birmingham Midland Institute and School of Music, and the Royal Manchester College of Music, as well as a certain number who have studied abroad or privately in this country. Thus it is evident that a wide and catholic spirit prevails in the administration of the Fund, and tends to make its influence exceptionally far-reaching.

MUSIC IN SECONDARY AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.—It is now necessary to turn from the schools in which music holds the first place to those in which till recent years it was either tolerated under protest or allowed to hold no place at all. The change of feeling in regard to music that is spreading over the country is altering the attitude of the public towards the importance of the subject as a factor in the mental and emotional development of the young: and the ever-widening influence of the Board of Education is beginning to obtain for the art a recognised place in the average school curriculum.

Strictly speaking there is no class of school outside the province of the Board of Education's Musical Inspector. But, as a matter of fact, his time is so much taken up with testing the students who seek year by year to qualify as elementary teachers, that he has little leisure to deal with the problem of music in secondary schools. In these circumstances it will be a decided gain if the inspectorial staff of the Board is increased in the near future with a view to the closer definition and regulation of the place of music in secondary education.

For the present there are at least two types of school which are left to their own devices in

this matter—the big public school and its necessary adjunct, the private preparatory school. The Board of Education's Inspector spoke forcibly on one occasion of the splendid work which is done, often under exceptional difficulties, by the music masters in the public schools. At the same time he made some equally trenchant remarks about the musical deficiencies of the preparatory schools. With much truth in them, his strictures were yet severe to the point of injustice. Music occupied a large amount of space in the Blue Book issued some years ago by the Board of Education on the subject of these schools, and the general level of the teaching in preparatory schools was admitted by the Director of Special Enquiries to be as high as any to be found in the kingdom. It is difficult to believe in the face of such evidence that music is especially neglected in these institutions; but if such ever was the case, it is certain that the fault lay with the public rather than with the headmasters and their assistants.

The Inspector's attack was made some years ago. Things have altered recently, and it may be confidently asserted that in public and preparatory schools music is beginning to come to its own. At the present moment there exists

a "Union of Directors of Music in Secondary Schools," and though its list of members is not as cumbrous as its title, the mere fact of its existence is decidedly significant. The deliberations of this body are restricted to matters of practical detail and are not of great public interest. It is, therefore, sufficient to say that the members are very much in earnest and that good cannot fail to come out of their labours.

Meantime the Board of Education has issued a list of rules as to the teaching of music in secondary schools. It is much fuller in detail than the scattered regulations to be found in the Elementary School Code, for in the case of the elementary schools the practical details are largely left to the local authorities. According to these regulations definite instruction in music must find a place in the curriculum of every school. The instruction is to be given in classes of not more than thirty-five, and is to consist of voice-training, ear-training by dictation, and sight-reading. It is recommended that there should be some singing every day, that definite instruction should be given at least twice a week, and that the whole school should sing together at least once a week, since singing is the only work in which all can join. Class-singing is to include part-singing, breathing

exercises and voice-production, and a special recommendation is made as to the provision of systematic opportunities for hearing good music. In this way all the children, including the very small proportion who may be classed for practical purposes as tone-deaf, may be taught how to listen, and, becoming aware of relative values, may learn to discriminate justly and to form a standard for themselves.

Instructors are warned not to impose upon children the standard of execution and emotional interpretation that is rightly expected from adults, and it is urged that "the function of Music in the education of the young should be thoroughly understood by all teachers." This last is no doubt a counsel of perfection, but it is of supreme importance if music is to be regarded not as a luxury but as an essential part of education, even though its value may not be capable of accurate assessment by examination.

The Board further recommends that sight-singing should begin early, to stultify the usual cry of "no time" in later stages, and urges the importance of aiming at the ultimate use of the Staff notation. Naturally the syllabus is mainly concerned with the question of singing, but the sections devoted to instrumental

music are as weighty as they are brief. They recommend early instruction in form and an ultimate course of harmony, and wisely ask why, if it is possible to arrange for instrumental teaching and practice in school hours in the case of girls, a similar course should not be adopted in the case of boys.

Turning now to the Elementary Schools, it would be both tedious and unprofitable to collate the regulations of all the local authorities ; but there are special reasons for examining the policy of the London County Council in regard to music. In the first place the Council controls a very large number of children of a class not supposed to possess unusual musical gifts, and in the second place it has recently reverted to a tradition which had been allowed to lapse for some years, and has appointed a Musical Inspector of its own. But while this fact gives a peculiar interest to the Council's attitude in the matter, its present policy is not easy to define, for the simple reason that the syllabus is under revision. It is therefore more profitable to leave the future to take care of itself, and to consider, not probable rules, but actual facts as to the work which is at present being done in the cause of music in the metropolitan schools.

Mention has already been made of the demands made upon the energies of the Board of Education's Musical Inspector in testing prospective teachers in the Training Colleges. With a few unimportant exceptions, all students in these Colleges are required to receive instruction in singing : their progress is carefully recorded by the College Staff and periodically tested by the Inspector, whose marks are taken into account before the granting of the certificate. The practical course provided includes unison and part-singing, sight-reading, ear-tests and dictation. It is supplemented by a theoretical examination in which a knowledge of the Staff and the Tonic Sol-fa notations is required. There is also a more advanced examination in which harder tests are set, and students examined in singing or playing on the pianoforte, organ or violin, as well as in harmony and form : this examination is optional, but, if successfully passed, materially facilitates the acquisition of the certificate. As, however, all teachers do not enter training colleges, there is provided yet another examination—practical and theoretical—for “acting teachers”; and if that is not sufficient, the Board is prepared to recognise certain examinations other than its own, thus leaving

candidates of every kind no reasonable difficulty in satisfying its musical requirements.

Now the possession of a music certificate is not specifically obligatory on all teachers under the London County Council, but it is tending to become so from the fact that to hold it considerably promotes a candidate's chances of obtaining a post. The fact is important, for instruction in music is compulsory and is given in every school to every child. At present, however, it is not given in every class, since the dearth of competent teachers makes it necessary to combine two, or in rare cases more than two, classes for musical instruction. Where it exists, this state of things is doubly unfortunate : it causes the children to be formed into groups of unwieldy size, unless the head teacher adopts the plan of exchanging teachers amongst the classes so that the musical work is left only to those competent to undertake it ; and it indicates the presence on the school staff of an element out of sympathy with musical training. Happily it is uncommon, and will inevitably disappear as the number of fully qualified teachers increases.

But the possession of the certificate is not in itself a complete qualification, since no examination can adequately assess the individual

power of imparting knowledge. A considerable number of the musically certificated teachers have proved themselves possessed in an astonishing degree of the ability to train singing classes to a high pitch of efficiency. It is not, however, surprising that there should be some holders of the certificate who show a marked incapacity for successful voice-training. To such as these authoritative advice and assistance are particularly serviceable. For the most part they are consistently and commendably eager for it, and in their interests it may be hoped the Council will ultimately improve upon the step it has taken and engage the whole, instead of the half, of its Musical Inspector's time.

The general level of the work done in the schools can be gauged approximately by a visit to one of the larger metropolitan competitive meetings. Speaking generally, an improvement in tone is the point demanding most attention ; but when the tone is good its excellence is surprising, and the result attained is apparently uninfluenced by the social position of the children. This fact goes to show what eminently useful work may be done, and in many cases is being done, in the singing classes in the formation of habits of correct vowel-pronunciation.

Apart from the question of tone, the children show an extraordinary facility in sight-reading, for which much credit must be given to the initial work of the Tonic Sol-fa movement. The Sol-fa system has laid the foundations of knowledge in the pupils, of taste and musical insight in the teachers, so well that it is now found perfectly possible to teach the Staff notation, at least after the fourth standard has been passed. Ultimately it may be hoped that the use of the Staff notation will be compulsory in all grades and standards.

It is further to be noted that breathing exercises form an integral part of the training given even in the infants' schools. Such training, when co-ordinated as it is with the prescribed physical drill, has an important bearing upon health. The influence of two spheres of school activity on one another is recognised also in the matter of articulation, the methods of the music classes in the best organised schools being duly co-ordinated with those that obtain in general instruction.

The Board of Education's Inspector has, it is well known, paid special attention to the choice of suitable music in the schools. The point is one of paramount importance, and is referred to again in the chapter devoted to

competitive meetings. Doubtless much still remains to be done in raising the standard of appreciation in country districts ; but, as far as the metropolitan schools are concerned, it is not likely that this problem will materially harass the Council's Inspector ; for, thanks to the general improvement of musical intelligence among the teachers, the question is tending to settle itself. Those who have had practical experience of musical work amongst children have learnt their almost infinite capacity for appreciating what is good, provided only that this capacity is wisely controlled and directed to gradual progress. To argue the matter in detail would be tedious. It is enough to say that in some of the Council's schools the children have learnt to take pleasure in such music as the vocal trios of Brahms ; and though these are exceptional cases, they indicate an advance in ideal on the puerile part-music which was far too common a generation ago.

In January, 1909, a conference on Voice-Culture and School-Singing was promoted by the London County Council and attended by some five hundred of the Council's teachers. Sir Walter Parratt presided, and addresses were given by Dr. Hulbert, Dr. McNaught, and Dr. Walford Davies. The significance of

the conference as an attempt at co-ordinating the various problems involved in vocal instruction is sufficiently attested by the subjects dealt with. Dr. Hulbert spoke on the hygienic aspect and Dr. Walford Davies on the moral value of music study. In dealing with the practical work, Dr. McNaught pointed out that singing classes were expected to attain good tone, correct production, a knowledge of the appointed traditional songs (English and foreign), some proficiency in elementary theory, the ability to sing at sight from the Staff, and the power to sing correctly and intelligently in parts.

It is difficult to estimate the value, as a national asset, of the work which the elementary schools are doing in the cause of music. Its importance would, however, be nullified if there existed no machinery for carrying it on, no link between the school and the local choral society. Fortunately the Evening Continuation Schools fill the gap, and form not a link so much as a goal. They bid fair, as musical activity increases, to endanger the existence of the smaller district musical society. The effectiveness of these schools is to some extent hampered by the fact that many children do not join evening classes when they leave the

elementary schools. Yet the annual registration fee is small—it cannot be more than five shillings, and in many cases is only one—and the benefits are proportionately great. Much good work might be done by judicious pressure brought to bear on outgoing scholars by their headmasters and headmistresses, for an active interest in music once discontinued is not easily resumed.

The evening choral classes are provided with a teacher and a practice-room, and half of the published price of the music is paid by the Council, on condition that specific instruction is given in theory and sight-singing in either or both notations. The work done necessarily varies with the size of the class from part-songs to oratorios and cantatas. Small classes, however, can and do combine into District Choral Unions, which are conducted as a rule by Evening Continuation School teachers. The conductor of such a Union receives some small additional pay for rehearsals but not for public performances. The latter are looked upon as voluntary efforts and not officially recognised as coming within the sphere of practical instruction. The force of the objection is perfectly reasonable, but the powerful stimulus of publicity towards adequate

interpretation and the educative value to the audiences of artistic performance deserve recognition.

Vocally the standard of attainment reached by the choral unions is very high, but their work is hampered by the lack of efficient orchestral assistance. The official belief appears to be that, if a capable choral body can be provided by an association of evening classes, an efficient instrumental force should also be forthcoming. At present this is impossible, though the existence of instrumental classes in the evening schools is preparing the way. These instrumental classes are doing excellent service. They are carrying on the unofficial work of the National Union of School Orchestras.¹ Having the school orchestras to draw upon they can command a sufficient number of string players, but they suffer from the ordinary weakness in brass and wood-wind. The reason for this is that efficient wind-instrument players can command good salaries in wind bands; and though, musically speaking, they would be better employed as orchestral players, it is unfair to blame them for selling their services to the highest bidders.

¹ See chapter viii.

The deficiency in wind instruments might, however, be made good by utilising the services of the boys as they leave the schools. These boys discontinue singing when their voices break, and are therefore in danger of losing their musical interest in a prolonged period of inactivity. If they do so, the choral unions suffer later on from a lack of tenors and basses. But their failing interest might be kept up by instruction in playing brass or wood-wind instruments. It is unlikely that the whole, or even the greater part, of them would become so proficient as instrumentalists in a limited period as to result ultimately in a serious dearth of male voices. It is more probable that a fair proportion would become capable players, for there is plenty of evidence at hand of what boys can do in this direction. Thus the orchestral work of the unions would gain and the London County Council would secure a reserve force of players for its municipal bands, while the majority, attaining no special instrumental skill, would fill the choral vacancies occurring from time to time.

At the present moment orchestral inefficiency is a serious drawback to choral work. The vocal unions give an excellent account of themselves when the local committees are willing to

pay voluntarily for assistance in wind-players and in leaders for the string departments of the orchestra. Many local committees have done this, but it is impossible to reckon on the provision of such purely voluntary assistance.

Meanwhile the evening instrumental work has suffered in one very definite way. In many cases the orchestral class is small, and the attendance register in consequence the reverse of imposing. In such cases small classes have occasionally been closed by authority. But the size of the class is no measure of its efficiency, and there is reason to believe that this fact is being recognised, and that in future no small class will be closed as long as it is demonstrably doing good work.

The desire to do good work is undeniably present. If, then, the Continuation Schools can become thoroughly efficient in both departments and so carry on the work begun below in a continuous line of progressive development towards the higher branches of music, it will be possible to apply to the schools generally the words used of the competitive meetings by an active worker in the cause of musical education. In the future they will have "the

power to riddle England through and through with music," for they have already inaugurated a work, of which the extent is as wide as the influence for good is incalculable.

CHAPTER III

MUNICIPAL MUSIC

Essential value of continuous activity—Local contrasts—Importance of winter seasons—London County Council : string and wind band programmes—Leeds : municipal orchestra : regrettable economy—Sheffield—Manchester—Harrogate—Eastbourne—Bournemouth : symphony and classical concerts—Brighton : a municipal festival—Organ recitals : St. George's Hall, Liverpool.

MUCH as municipal authorities vary in the quantity and quality of the music they provide, the value of their work depends ultimately upon its continuity. The task that they attempt is a difficult one, and the measure of its success is hard to estimate. It is concerned mainly with adults, whose minds are less impressionable and less open to outside influence than those of children. The power of memory and early association has created strong prejudices in their minds ; and in music, more almost than in any other sphere of mental energy, the abandonment of an early prejudice requires a conscious act of will that can only spring

from increasing knowledge or from an innate desire for progress in sensibility. When this desire is absent, improvement in taste can only be won by slow degrees ; for the growth of knowledge is gradual, and conscious effort is distasteful to those whose attitude is mainly passive. Untrained audiences are impatient of strange ideas, and particularly resent all novelty which depends for its effect on increased complexity. Only familiarity can overcome their mental lethargy and dispel the more powerful influence of prejudice by the substitution of new associations for old ones. Naturally the process is a slow one, and its effect takes long to mature. Therefore the continuous activity that is made possible by municipal support is a valuable agent in the spread of musical development.

The task of overcoming ignorance and prejudice confronts all liberally minded corporations, but the difficulty is a variable quantity ; for the strength of the innate desire for progress varies in localities as in individuals. Musical intelligence does not depend in its essence upon social position, nor is its force derived from the extent and scope of education in other subjects : these factors are only significant in so far as they affect the opportunities for its

cultivation. But it is as true as it is curious that natural aptitude for music is found in very diverse degrees in different parts of the country. The fact, though familiar, needs emphasising as one of the causes that explain the very wide difference existing in the scope of the work done, for example, at Leeds, as compared with that achieved in districts less musically inclined. The briefest survey of municipal music presents a striking study in contrasts, but it would be very unfair, though very easy, to labour them at length. An attempt to take the opposite side, however, and argue for equal merit in all manifestations of municipal energy in music would invite failure. Undoubtedly there is greater enterprise in some places than in others, as is shown—to take a very simple instance—by the attitude of certain towns to the length of their respective seasons.

Steady continuity of performance being the greatest factor in securing success, it is clearly unwise to confine the work done—with the exception, perhaps, of organ recitals—to the summer months. In the majority of cases municipal music consists of brass band performances in the open air. It is natural that motives of economy should confine them to those months of the year when artificial light

is not required. In London the National Sunday League would gladly continue its outdoor work till later in the year, if the London County Council's bandstands were artificially lighted. Presumably the League would pay for the privilege, whereas borough authorities are naturally disinclined to place a further burden on the rates. Yet winter performances are not unknown. They are given, for instance, in the public halls at Sheffield, and the extra expense is met by a slight additional charge which will be referred to later. Programmes of a less popular nature are also put forward, under entirely different circumstances, at Bournemouth. It is, therefore, clear that the effort can be made and it is certain that it is worth making. People value most what they pay for and are much more disposed to make the serious effort of attentive listening indoors than in the open air. Moreover, indoor performances have a powerful influence in the direction of restraint on brass bands, the violence of whose efforts often lends colourable ground to the mistaken belief that they are only suited to outdoor work.

The following account of municipal work is not in the least degree exhaustive. It only claims to be representative, takes no account

of municipal schools of music, and deals exclusively with such concert performances, as depend for support, in part at least, on the rates.

The Parks and Open Spaces Committee of the London County Council spends £12,500 a year on band performances. The Council possesses one large instrumental force of over one hundred performers divided into three sections, one organised as an orchestral body, the other two as military bands. In addition to this triple body the Council hires ninety bands, and secures a measure of uniformity in their policy by placing them under a central adviser, Mr. Carl Armbruster. The following short extract from an address delivered to bandmasters in 1907 sufficiently indicates the nature of the views impressed on bandmasters by the Council's representative :—

It would be utterly absurd to force down high-class programmes where the public do not want them. To a certain extent we are bound to suit the public taste : we don't want to be told that the whole programme is above their heads. But on the other hand it is our duty to try to raise the public taste.

As a pious opinion this is eminently sensible, and admits of considerable latitude in the interpretation of the cautious phrase "to a certain

extent." On the other hand there is a thought too much caution in the succeeding words, "we do not want to be told." We are tempted to ask "Why not?" For it is a matter of common knowledge, at least in London, that the County Council has made great efforts to raise the tone of public taste. It is not an easy matter to put forward a programme of which it could be truthfully said that, as a whole, it was above the heads of a heterogeneous audience, and it is a pity that there should be any need for caution in the matter. But while municipal affairs are treated as a branch of party politics, even musical energy must be controlled by questions of prudence.

The London authorities are to be congratulated on the possession of one string band. Six programmes, selected at random from a number kindly supplied by the Council's officers, show more clearly than vague generalities the educative value of the performances that are given. These six programmes contain the overtures to Gade's *Hamlet*, Gounod's *Mirella*, Mendelssohn's *Athalie*, Smetana's *Bartered Bride*, and Weber's *Euryanthe*, as well as Wagner's *Columbus*, Brahms's *Academic* and Sullivan's *In Memoriam* overtures; Beethoven's fourth Symphony, Raff's third, Schu-

mann's fourth, and the sixth ("Pathetic") symphony of Tchaikovsky; selections from Gounod's *Irene*, Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, and Sullivan's *Ivanhoe*; the march from Beethoven's *Ruins of Athens*, Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*, Grieg's first *Peer Gynt Suite*, Stanford's *Irish Rhapsody*, and Granville Bantock's *Pierrot of the Minute*.

The wind band programmes naturally vary extensively in the character of the music put forward. Six programmes of one of the Council's own bands contain Beethoven's *Coriolanus*, Mozart's *Titus*, and Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* overtures; the overtures to Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Mackenzie's *Cricket on the Hearth*, Nicolai's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Rossini's *William Tell*, Schubert's *Rosamunde*, Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, and Weber's *Oberon*; and selections from operas by Auber, Benedict, Leoncavallo, Meyerbeer, Nicolai, Puccini, Rossini, Johann Strauss, Verdi, Wagner, and Wallace.

Possibly the standard of all the performances by wind bands is not so uniformly high. These programmes, however, set an excellent example. They show what has already been done, and they deserve summarising as an earnest of

future attainment. The brief digest of the orchestral work speaks for itself. But special praise may be given to the authorities for including a work of such significance as Mr. Bantock's *Pierrot of the Minute* within a few months of its first production at Worcester in September, 1908.

The Council's musical season extends over thirteen weeks and begins about the middle of May. Each performance lasts for three hours, and the prepared programme must be first approved by the Council's musical adviser. The character of the performance varies according to the presumptive taste of the audience for whom it is designed—an arrangement necessary at present, but soon to lapse, one may hope, with the spread of the competitive movement.¹ Meanwhile such music as is admittedly valueless is banned by authority. Monotony is avoided by a stipulation that, as a general rule, no two pieces by the same composer shall be allowed on any one programme. If the work is to be popular, the provision may stand; but its value is open to question on the educative side, which can be advanced by occasional performances of works drawn exclusively from one composer, or by illustrative programmes

¹ See chapter viii.

so designed as to include of necessity several examples of a given writer.

The London County Council, then, has done much for the advancement of music, but it must be admitted that a summer season of outdoor performances by wind and string bands in the proportion of ninety-two to one does not represent the high-water mark of attainment. The enterprise of the Leeds City Council is in striking contrast, and affords a valuable object-lesson. Yet it must be borne in mind that the conditions are widely different, that the performances are not free, and that they have unfortunately resulted in comparative failure.

The Leeds City Council established in 1903 a series of orchestral concerts under the direction of the city organist. These orchestral concerts were the first to be given on definitely educational lines by any municipality in the kingdom. They were held during the winter months in the Town Hall, and were so appreciated that they attracted audiences numbering as many as 2500. Four years later their educational side was emphasised by the fact that the control of them was transferred to the Director of Education, and they were co-ordinated with the work of the Municipal School of Music, special courses of analytical lectures being given

in order that the performances might have their full effect. The programmes have steadily exploited the highest class of orchestral music, and special prominence has been given to modern British and French works as representing the highest development of the creative activity of to-day. The use of the Town Hall and organ was granted free, and the only expense, apart from the music and its exponents, was that of lighting, which was supplied at a reduced rate. The prices of admission varied from eighteenpence to twopence, while serial tickets for reserved seats were issued at 12s. 6d. and 7s. 6d.

During the winter season of 1908-9 the average attendance was about 1300, and the receipts failed to cover the expenses by some £200. The party in the majority on the City Council decided that this deficit could not again be borne by the rates. Therefore the concerts must needs be self-supporting in the immediate future, and the price of admission will be raised. The charge for single seats will vary from three shillings to sixpence, and that for serial tickets from one guinea to half-a-crown, the latter payable by instalments. Under these circumstances there is every probability that the concerts will pay their way, and as they will

still be controlled by the Education Department, their value should not be lessened. Perhaps the original enterprise was too ambitious to command instant success. It is certainly true that the music-loving mechanic has little cause to complain when he can attend ten excellent orchestral concerts at a charge of threepence each. On the other hand, the total cost of the series is estimated at less than £700, and the deficit of £200 placed a ridiculously small burden on the rates. Individual music teachers and concert givers are among the first to suffer from periods of financial depression, since heads of families find curtailment of music fees an easy method of retrenchment. A more liberal policy should be expected from an enlightened Corporation which has set an example to every other municipality in England. Music has never received adequate support from the State ; it is being supported in increasing measure by the local authorities ; but it is not apparently yet past the stage at which it is singled out as the most appropriate medium for economy.

The Corporation of Sheffield, a town inferior in musical activity to no other in England, has not aimed so high as Leeds, but has spread its energies over a wider area. After an initial period of spade-work carried out by individual

bands, which played in the parks by permission but without remuneration, the Corporation took the matter in hand in 1894, appointed a director to organise performances, and expended £60 upon them. At the present time 200 band performances are given in the parks in the summer months. They are supplemented by concerts designed to attract the poorer classes, and given throughout the year. These concerts are held in the open in courts and alleys during the summer and in public halls during the winter months. Both band performances and open-air concerts are free, but at the winter concerts one penny is charged for admission and threepence for a reserved seat. At the present time the annual cost of all these performances amounts to £1200. This sum is provided by a rate, not exceeding one-eighth of a penny in the pound, which brings in some £700, and by grants from the Tramways Committee, which amount, with the receipts, to some £500. The programmes put forward are decidedly popular in character, and are more attractive, because less monotonous, in the winter than in the summer.

Nearly £3000 was spent in 1908 on music by the Corporation of Manchester. For this sum more than 500 band performances were

given, about one-third of them taking place on Sundays. Practically the whole of the cost was borne by the rates. The extent of the public appreciation is indicated in an interesting summary, published by the Corporation, which estimates the total number of visitors at 2,600,000. Specimen programmes to hand do not, it must be confessed, testify to a level much above the ordinary in the character of the music performed. The best of them available for reference is characteristically English in its mingling of bad music with good. It is natural to include definitely sacred music in a Sunday programme, such as this one is, but Jackson of Exeter, when represented by his *Te Deum in F*, hardly deserves a place beside Meyerbeer, Nicolai, Verdi, and Wagner. The standard of performance may be guessed from the fact that in this case the band is described as the winner of nearly sixty prizes in open contests.

The total sum spent on the Kursaal and Concert Rooms at Harrogate last year was more than £14,000 and the receipts amounted to £11,500. The published accounts of the Corporation show that the amount spent on the actual music and its performance was about £4000, while the sale of tickets and

programmes brought in some £8000. The programmes of three concerts for one day in the summer of 1909 are curiously diverse: that arranged for the morning is essentially popular and consists mainly of dance music; the afternoon concert reaches a much higher level; and that given in the evening, after exploiting Mendelssohn, Handel, Bizet, and Wagner, culminates in an incongruous dramatic sketch.

Eastbourne maintains a municipal band at an annual cost of about £3000, provided by a penny rate and the income derived from the sale of seats and programmes. The band plays every morning throughout the year; it may also be heard every afternoon during the winter, every evening and every alternate afternoon during the summer. The Corporation spends also a sum of about £150 a year on hired bands, the smallness of the amount being due not to lack of municipal enterprise, but rather to the presence in the town of the Duke of Devonshire's excellent private orchestra.

The Corporation of Bournemouth maintains two reed bands. The larger performs once a day in the winter and, supported by popular entertainers and concert parties, three times a

day in the summer on the Pier; the smaller plays daily in Boscombe and the various pleasure gardens of the borough. The work of the bands is overshadowed by that of the municipal orchestra, which has existed, though not in its present form, since 1893. In that year Mr. Dan Godfrey provided a military band for the summer season. Some of the players engaged were able to play string as well as brass instruments. These formed the nucleus of a small orchestra of twenty-five performers and gave concerts during the winter of 1893 and 1894. In the following year the orchestra was increased to thirty-three, and later, in the autumn of 1895, it instituted the series of classical concerts which, with a band now numbering nearly fifty performers, have raised municipal music at Bournemouth to the front rank.

The municipal orchestra plays daily throughout the year, but is best known for the work done at the double series of symphony and classical concerts, lasting from October to May. There are thirty concerts of each class. Admission to the symphony concerts costs one shilling and a serial ticket one guinea, but half these prices obtain at the classical concerts, which can be given more cheaply because they

are not rehearsed. The production of new music is reserved for the symphony concerts, but in other respects there is little to choose between the two series so far as the composition of the programmes is concerned. In the first 500 concerts, 891 works were performed, of which 114 were British, while 83 were given for the first time in the borough and 44 for the first time in England. In the season of 1908-9 the programmes included 38 symphonies, among them being the first eight of Beethoven. The total number of works put forward was 226, of which 41 were new works by British composers. These included Mr. Hamilton Harty's violin concerto and the symphony of Sir Edward Elgar. Choral work is, however, neglected.

The work done in the summer months is of a much lighter nature, but the standard of the winter performances is so consistently high that the summer's relaxation carries no reproach. The concerts have to pay, and summer visitors are not prepared for serious efforts. That the concerts are frankly run for profit differentiates them to a certain degree from much municipal effort, but it does not detract either from the enterprise of the Corporation or the skilful management of the musical director. Of course the circumstances are peculiar, for Bournemouth

is a wealthy town and attracts wealthy visitors. There are, however, other towns so situated, and what can be done in one place can obviously be done in others. It only remains to add that the best artists are engaged to give additional concerts and recitals, and to call attention to the fact that here, as at the Crystal Palace, an excellent orchestra has been developed from a military band.

The example of Bournemouth may have had something to do with the recent awakening of dormant energy at Brighton, where for many years music was officially unrecognised, except in the engagement of a military band during the summer months. The authorities, however, were roused to a sense of their responsibilities in 1907, and engaged a municipal orchestra for three months at a cost of some £1300. A larger orchestra under a new conductor, Mr. Joseph Sainton, was engaged the following year for the summer season; and symphony and classical concerts were given with such conspicuous success that the orchestra was made permanent and the grant for its maintenance increased by £20 a week. So much further success attended this experiment that it resulted last year in a festival, the first held at Brighton since 1828. The Brighton

Sacred Harmonic Society supplied a chorus, and the works given were *Elijah*, *The Dream of Gerontius*, Mr. Coleridge-Taylor's "*Bonbon*" *Suite*, selections from *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, Sir Edward Elgar's *Symphony* and "*In the South*" *Overture*, Sir C. V. Stanford's *Irish Rhapsody*, Sir A. C. Mackenzie's "*Britannia*" *Overture*, and the "*Pathetic*" *Symphony* of Tchaikovsky. A second festival was held in February of the present year, when new works by Mr. James Dear, Mr. Arthur Hervey, Mr. Coleridge-Taylor, and Dr. W. H. Speer were produced, and Dr. Christian Sinding paid a first visit to England to conduct his own *Symphony in D minor*. As on the previous occasion, Mr. Joseph Sinton was the conductor-in-chief, and the meeting met with an increase in public support sufficient to arouse the expectation of its annual repetition. This is the only municipal festival in existence, and the only festival not managed by a committee.

The work done under municipal patronage at Leeds, Bournemouth, and Brighton possesses distinctive features. The examples of Harrogate, Eastbourne, and Manchester are on the other hand only typical of that which is done in numberless other boroughs, in which the support of the authorities is confined to the

maintenance of bands, coupled, in the case of holiday resorts, with the provision of concerts of a rather popular nature. It would be easy, and tedious, to multiply instances; but before leaving the subject I wish to refer briefly to one form of music-making which flourishes—especially in the provinces—under the protection of municipal bodies. I mean the organ recital; and I include it, not only for its positive educative influence, but because it is practically non-existent as a form of municipal enterprise in Central London, where consequently the use of the organ as a solo instrument, unconnected with religious services, is insufficiently recognised. Perhaps the loss to London is not very material, for the amount of available organ literature is not extensive, and the organ works of Bach and Mendelssohn, the principal writers for the instrument, are appropriate to the services of the Church. But in provincial towns, in which orchestral concerts are less common, the borough organist is relied upon to popularise much music that would otherwise remain hardly known; and though transcriptions and arrangements are not entirely satisfactory, they are at least better than nothing, and can reproduce upon a modern organ the essential features of their

originals with some approach to fidelity. In this respect, therefore, the recitals of the borough organist meet a definite need, and they have the further advantage of making known the organ works of Bach, which will remain disregarded by the majority of churchgoers until the "voluntary" takes a more dignified place as an integral part of the service.

As an example of what may be done I shall cite the case of Liverpool, which has had a borough organist for nearly forty-five years. When St. George's Hall is not rendered unavailable by Assize and other business, two recitals are given every Saturday, that in the afternoon being devoted to classical music, while the evening concert is of a more popular character. Each recital lasts an hour. The charge for admission is sixpence in the afternoon and one penny in the evening. No number on any programme is given more than once in the course of the year, in order that the recitals may cover the widest possible field; and the absence of repetitions has little effect upon the audiences, for the average annual attendance at the double series of recitals is nearly fifty-four thousand. The case of Liverpool is typical of many other towns. I place

it first because the concerts are made up entirely of organ music, and because the post of organist to the Liverpool Corporation was held for forty years by the eminently skilful artist, W. T. Best.

Of equal importance, both in their high level of artistic excellence and their sound educative value, have been the weekly organ recitals given by Dr. J. Kendrick Pyne in the Manchester Town Hall during the last thirty years. An admission fee of threepence is in this case charged ; and the manner in which the concert room of the Town Hall has, during this long period, been thronged week by week with an audience, which takes an intelligent and critical interest in organ music of the most classical as well as the most modern schools, is an eloquent testimony to the real value of quiet and persistent work on these lines.

Except in the selection of music as a medium for economy, the example of Leeds and some other large towns deserves to be followed everywhere in the kingdom. Meanwhile, until the Government supports music, the obligation of encouraging such forms of it as cannot subsist on private enterprise alone rests in general upon municipal authorities.

CHAPTER IV

MUSIC IN THE ARMY AND THE NAVY

State support—Influence of military bands—Origin and early history of military music—The Royal Artillery Band: its concerts—Kneller Hall: pupils and students: practical training—Recent developments in military music—Modern conditions and standards—Need for improvement in position of bandmasters and prospects of bandsmen—Inadequate grants—Dearth of military music—Music in the Navy—The Royal Naval School of Music at Eastney.

THE concluding words of the previous chapter, though true in substance, yet require some modification, for the duties of municipal bodies are lessened here and there by the existence of a field of music which is neither self-supporting nor officially unrecognised. This field of music cannot, moreover, be lightly treated, and there is ample justification for a detailed account of music in the army at the present day. The subject is a wide one, and embraces many points of interest. Like other branches of the art, military music has shared in the striking renaissance of recent years; it has a long and curious history, instructive if not splendid; it

exercises an influence that is growing wider every year, and has long since transcended the limits of military circles: and it is the only branch of music that is consistently supported and regulated by the State.

I will take the last point first and set down briefly the provision that is made out of public money for military bands. For the moment I shall neglect all questions arising out of the only Government schools of music in the country—the Royal Military School of Music at Hounslow and the Royal Naval School of Music at Eastney. The maintenance of the former is not the only tax which music in the army imposes upon public money; for apart from the pay, pensions, and uniforms of bandmasters and bandsmen, the Treasury makes a grant of £160 per annum to each regimental band for music, instruments, repairs, and all the incidental expenses covered by the convenient term “appurtenances.” For the sake of completeness it is well to add here that this grant is authoritatively declared to be sufficient. Therefore, though the grant is not lavish and the scale of the band is seriously limited in consequence, the former practice of supplementing the regimental band fund by officers’ subscriptions is now forbidden.

But whatever evils the present position entails, it is no small thing that military music—I apply the term to music in the army, and do not here use it in a technical sense—should be supported at all by the State. The reasons for its unique position in this matter are clear. The musicians of the army are soldiers, and their functions are primarily martial. Therefore they are paid as soldiers on grounds which would not apply in the case of civilian musicians. But it is pertinent to observe that the public money spent in this way is applied to furthering an influence far wider than was originally contemplated; for the employment of military bands at places of public entertainment enables them to appeal to larger audiences than can be reached even by the leading metropolitan orchestras. At exhibitions and fêtes, as well as at private gatherings, they have enormous opportunities for influencing public taste, and if in turn public taste has reacted on them, it is only fair to say that the musicians of the army in the past—and still more in the present—have taken full advantage of the educational openings put before them.

Clearly this development was never contemplated. Music in the army was originally martial music pure and simple; that is to say, it

was confined to such noisy instruments of brass and percussion as were required for signalling orders over a wide area. The reasons that have brought about a change are outside my province. But the bare facts of history can be easily set out. Moreover, they are not so widely known as to be the stock in trade of every amateur, or even of every professional musician; and some of them are important in their bearing upon progress, while none are without interest.

Military music in a state of development at all approaching modern ideas is of comparatively recent origin; but far back in our history the arts of war and music were connected, and it was to their usefulness in times of war that the mediæval minstrels owed their positions at the courts of kings and barons in times of peace. The introduction of the fife in the sixteenth century was the first step towards the formation of a band as we understand the term, and when the fife was superseded as leading instrument by the oboe about the middle of the seventeenth century, and the oboe by the clarionet one hundred years later, the band of reed, brass, and percussion instruments was practically complete. The first fully equipped bands of this class were formed in

Prussia under the auspices of Frederick the Great.

The example set by Prussia was not long in being followed in this country, but modern military music in the British Army practically dates from the formation in 1762 of the famous band of the Royal Artillery, the first band to be officially recognised and provided for in the Army Estimates. Its history is worth tracing in brief detail, because it represents the growth and progress of military music in England. It was constituted on the German model, and consisted originally of two trumpets, two horns, two bassoons, and four oboes or clarionets. Each bandsman was required to play also a stringed instrument, and it is a notable fact that for very many years bandmasters and bandsmen alike were foreigners. From 1810 to 1881 this band was controlled by English conductors, but no native musician directed it during the first forty-eight years of its existence, and the fact that an Englishman was appointed in 1810 is somewhat exceptional, for it is not too much to say that up to about 1860 most military bandsmen in the British army were foreigners. Taste and fashion fluctuated between Italians and Germans, but the preference was not given to British subjects, and

the inevitable result—the importation of needy adventurers—was disastrous for a time to military music in this country. In this connection it is well to include mention of a curiously foolish fad which led, right down to the time of the Crimean War, to the employment of negroes, who played percussion instruments and a grotesque precursor of the modern glockenspiel known as the “Jingling Johnnie.” The want of taste and dignity, which engaged these men, lauded their manipulation of a gigantic rattle, and admired the acrobatic contortions that accompanied their music-making, provides significant evidence of the state of things from which we have, fortunately, escaped.

For in the first half of the nineteenth century military music in this country was in a bad way. Foreigners, not necessarily of a superior type, predominated in leading and subordinate positions, and, though the level of execution was considered high, the standard adopted in the selection of music was confessedly low. In the interesting *Memoirs of the Royal Artillery Band* I find an account of a concert given in 1851 by the massed bands of the Royal Artillery, the First and Second Life Guards, the Royal Horse Guards, the

Grenadier, Coldstream, and Scots Guards. The programme is too long to quote. It is sufficient for the present purpose to relate that the *Times*, in commenting on the concert and praising the manner in which it was carried through, regretted the triviality of the music chosen, and found in one number only—the overture to Weber's *Euryanthe*—a piece of music “worthy of consideration as an artistic performance.” But it is fair to add that there was then even a greater dearth of good military music than there is now, for until Messrs. Boosey and Co. took the matter up in 1845 there was actually no military music available in printed form, and bandmasters were driven to beg, borrow, or steal from jealous colleagues according as their individual skill dictated or opportunity offered. The only good point about a system which seems prehistoric to modern ideas lay in the amount of regimental rivalry it excited.

No doubt it was this spirit of rivalry that prompted the Royal Artillery Band to give public performances. At any rate this famous body, constituted from the first, it will be remembered, as a string and wind band, began to give concerts as far back as 1810, and, as this was three years before the Philharmonic

Society began its work, the Royal Artillery Band may justly claim to be the oldest of existing concert-giving organisations. Symphonies were given from the first, but the character of the band and its performances was substantially improved when the Band Fund was established in 1856. This move was due to the enterprise of the bandmaster of the day, Mr. James Smyth, to whose wife must be given the credit of having formed the Royal Artillery Choral Union and so increased the interest of the concerts by the inclusion of choral works.

The first great step in the official improvement of military music in England dates from the establishment of the school at Kneller Hall, known since 1887 as the "Royal" Military School of Music. It was the direct outcome of the Crimean War and the opportunities then afforded to H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge of drawing unflattering comparisons between French and English bands. Having heard the French bands, the Commander-in-Chief made up his mind to improve music in the British army, and at the same time to relieve regiments of the expense of employing civilian musicians as bandmasters. The Military School of Music, supported at first by

contributions from the officers of each regiment, was the result of his determination. A Government grant was first made in 1872, and the institution is now entirely supported by the State at an annual cost of more than £2000.

Instruction is given at Kneller Hall to a number of "pupils," of whom the normal number is about 130. These are sent by their various regiments to be trained as bandsmen. The course of training lasts from twelve to eighteen months, and comprises instruction in one or more special instruments (selected in each case by the pupil's commanding officer) and in the elements of theory, harmony, and instrumentation. At the end of his time the successful pupil returns to his regiment with a certificate of conduct and musical proficiency, hoping, when he has gained the rank of non-commissioned officer, to return to Kneller Hall as a "student."

The students average forty or fifty in number, and about fifteen of them pass out each year to take up positions as bandmasters. No candidate is admitted as a student until he has served seven years as a bandsman, and has passed an examination in the elements of music, harmony, combined counterpoint, instrumentation, and musical history. The course of in-

struction lasts from two to three years, and demands a staff of ten "wind" and three "string" professors. Each student takes a stringed instrument as a principal study, and a second instrument which may be one of the string group or the pianoforte or the organ. To qualify as a bandmaster—and it must be remembered that no one can be a bandmaster in the army unless he has qualified at Kneller Hall—he must satisfy the examiners in harmony, counterpoint, military band and orchestral instrumentation, scoring for military band and orchestra, teaching and management of a church choir and conducting: and he must also show proof that he has a working knowledge of all military and orchestral instruments, and is competent to instruct bandsmen in their use. When he has proved himself efficient and passed in every branch of this comprehensive scheme, the student is placed on the "qualified form," and remains at Kneller Hall engaged in practical work until he passes out as an appointed bandmaster.

So far the course is an eminently sensible one: but its scope is further enlarged in several practical ways that ought to stimulate the imitative admiration of other schools of music. In the first place students are encouraged to

hear good music, for the Government makes a special grant of £100 per annum to allow of their attending concerts and operatic performances in London. Each student is also taught to teach under supervision. He has four or five pupils allotted to him, and is bound to give them a fixed amount of instruction every week and to report upon their progress. He also learns to conduct, and is stimulated to composition by means he cannot evade. Concerts are given periodically; each student in turn composes one number on each programme and divides with his fellows the duty of conducting the other numbers put forward. Each student, again, is responsible in rotation for the arrangement, rehearsal, and direction of the chapel services. Whenever his turn comes round he must compose an introductory voluntary, score it for full band and also score whatever anthem or service is selected for performance; and as in addition he is responsible for the chanting, which is alternately Anglican and Gregorian, every means is taken to ensure his leaving Kneller Hall as a fully-equipped church musician. Further, there are three annual competitions offering prizes for orchestral scoring, quick-march writing, and a composition for military band: and the

Musicians' Company presents an annual medal to the student who composes the best piece of military music. When all these facts are taken into account, it is not surprising to learn that the German Government has instituted a school of military music constituted largely on the lines of Kneller Hall.

This last fact—that Germany has now followed our lead—indicates that England has at length reached the premier position in military music. The state of things which obtained forty or fifty years ago, when two-thirds of our bandmasters were foreigners, is past and gone, and to-day not only the bandmasters but nine-tenths of the bandsmen are British subjects. The change is largely due to the influence of the Royal Military School of Music, and with the alteration in personnel has come a surprising advance in the character of the music affected by our bands. A generation ago the character of a performance was determined largely by the skill of individual soloists, but now increased efficiency has banished the *bravura* element, done away with the meretricious solos supported by thin and meaningless figures of accompaniment, and given rise to a general standard based on collective rather than on individual attainments.

It would be unfair to attribute the change entirely to Kneller Hall. Some part of it is due to the general improvement in public taste and the growing appreciation of music of the best class, and a special reason for recent progress is to be found in the zeal and activity of such individual bandmasters as the late Dan Godfrey. But, whatever the cause, it is not too much to say that at the present moment no other country has more good military bands than England. Indeed, London alone might reasonably claim to be better provided than many continental countries, owing to the presence and activity of the string and wind bands of the Royal Artillery and the Royal Engineers, and of the reed bands of the Life Guards, Horse Guards, Grenadiers, Coldstreams, Scots, and Irish Guards. Parts of the provinces, too, are almost equally well supplied, for—to give but a few instances—there are string bands at the garrisons of Dover, Portsmouth, and Plymouth, and like organisations attached to the Royal Marine Artillery at Eastney, the Royal Marine Light Infantry at Chatham, and the Royal Marine Light Infantry at Gosport. The three last are perhaps out of place among army bands, but I mention them here because they help to emphasise a point to which attention should be

drawn, namely, that the existence of naval and military bands renders a certain number of towns entirely independent of municipally supported music. There is, for example, no need of a corporation band at Southsea.

To review at length the work only of the bands I have mentioned would be tedious if not impossible. I shall therefore confine myself to a few sample facts which will speak for themselves and provide material for obvious inferences. A number of programmes performed at metropolitan and provincial exhibitions by the band of the Grenadier Guards contain symphonies by Beethoven, Dvořák, and Tchaikovsky, as well as complete works by and selections from Wagner and Saint-Saëns. An even higher, because less "popular," standard is maintained at the symphony concerts given annually in London and Woolwich by the Royal Artillery Band. Specimen programmes I have examined contain symphonies by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Raff, and Tchaikovsky, with slighter works of Saint-Saëns, Elgar, and Sibelius. These symphony concerts are unique; no other army band attempts anything on such a scale; and it is worthy of note, firstly, that the standard set in public performance is maintained at the guest nights of the officers'

mess, and secondly, that the concerts have been the means of introducing many important works to English audiences. Thus Wagner's *Meistersinger Overture* and Schumann's *Concertstück* for four horns and orchestra were first performed in England by the Royal Artillery Band in 1868; and in later times Mancinelli's *Cleopatra Overture*, conducted by the composer at a Philharmonic concert in February, 1909, had been given at Woolwich fourteen years previously. In this case the influence of the work is restricted by the fact that it is done at subscription concerts which only a limited number of the public can attend; but other bands have wider opportunities, and I will give one fact to show what advantage is taken of them. The band of the Coldstream Guards played regularly to an audience roughly estimated at fifteen thousand people at the Dublin Exhibition of 1907, and its efforts were so appreciated that even a transcription of J. S. Bach's Organ Fantasia and Fugue in G minor was loudly redemanded. The enthusiasm of the audiences may be judged from the fact that on one occasion, at the express invitation of the bandmaster, the whole crowd of listeners consented without demur to sing the National Anthem under his direction. In estimating the

value of such work in raising public taste, it would be unfair to pass over the fact that the men who do it are soldiers as well as bandsmen, and cannot devote the whole of their time to their musical duties.

So far the present condition of music in the army has been proved satisfactory, and it is only necessary to state that the work which the premier bands are doing is being paralleled, often under great difficulties, in the Line regiments. There is, however, still room for improvement in modern conditions, and I desire to set out certain ways in which the music of the army may be brought to a yet higher state of efficiency.

In the first place the status of bandmasters calls for improvement. The first bandmaster to receive even an honorary commission was Mr. Dan Godfrey, who was made honorary second lieutenant in 1887. Four bandmasters received similar honours in 1898, and in the following year the honorary gave place to the actual rank. There are now four bandmasters—three in the army and one in the marines—who hold commissions: and a like distinction is enjoyed by the musical directors in the military and naval schools of music. But this number is fixed; and that it should be so

is wrong, and shows that the War Office has yet to learn the true value of music. Were there more commissions available, even better men would be forthcoming, and the result would be increased efficiency all round. Moreover, commissions should go in part at least by merit and not wholly by seniority, and those who hold them should not of necessity be rated, as they are at present, in one of the two lowest possible grades—quartermaster and second lieutenant. The bestowal of a higher honorary grade is not an adequate reward. In fact, it begs the question and practically admits the existence of a rule which reflects little credit on the authorities. It should be amended without delay, for it will one day be looked back upon with bewilderment and, possibly, shame.

Whether commissioned or not, bandmasters have at least the consolation of drawing special pay in virtue of their office ; but bandsmen are paid as private soldiers. The individual bandman's chance of becoming a non-commissioned officer is small. When he has served his first period of twelve years, he must enlist for nine years more in order to qualify for the pension of one shilling and eightpence a day. He should have more pay or higher rank at the

end of twelve years, and a larger pension when he has served twenty-one: that is to say, if it is desired to retain him in the army. Under present conditions the bandsman who has served twelve years hesitates to enlist for a further lengthy period, and often joins a civilian orchestra.

Again, the Treasury grant of £160 a year to each regimental band is manifestly inadequate, since it admits at the most of a band of twenty-two men and four boys and is scarcely sufficient for that modest number. The Staff bands do not suffer, for they are privileged: but the rule already referred to, by which officers' subscriptions to a band-fund are forbidden, applies to all Line regiments, and the result is either inefficiency or an incentive to regimental rivalry expressed in the tangible form of donations, which impose a heavy tax upon the poorer officers.

This is regrettable, since the bands of the Line regiments are confessedly doing good work. In some cases their enterprise is carrying them too far, for they are attempting under great difficulties the double organisation of string and wind. It is hard to blame them, but it is clear that there must be cases in which lack of funds inevitably entails a weakness in

one department, and that, unfortunately, is apt to be the wind band. This is much to be deplored. In London we have many—perhaps too many—excellent orchestras, and in the provinces the competitive movement has called into existence a number of splendidly effective brass bands. But the reed bands are the bands of the army essentially, and no ill-judged enthusiasm should be suffered to impair their efficiency.

Possibly the question of suitable music has something to do with the attitude of bandmasters in this matter, for military music is deplorably limited. The rubbish of past generations has gone for good, but there is little to take its place, since the great composers have not written much for military bands. No doubt the low standard of the past did not attract them; but now that all-round efficiency has been attained, the dearth of special music has resulted in the almost exclusive use of transcriptions. These are, no doubt, productive of good, and they must be used in the absence of original matter: but they are not invariably well constructed, and, when they are, they cannot invest the music with its true appeal. We have, however, at length got a British school of composition, and

here is an opening for those composers who are content with native idiom. In this connection, although the subject is treated elsewhere, it is necessary that I should point out what an excellent example the Musicians' Company has set in instituting an open competition for military music.

My sketch of music in the army is now as complete as I propose to make it, though it is not by any means exhaustive. A brief account of music in the navy will form a convenient pendant and may fittingly be included in the same chapter, since in both services music is now State-controlled. The reorganisation of music in the navy is, however, of very recent date, and it is not necessary that I should attempt to trace its history prior to the foundation of the Royal Naval School of Music in 1903. Before that date Maltese and Italian bands were employed almost invariably, but in 1903 the Admiralty took the matter in hand, and the Royal Naval School of Music was established at Eastney to supply bands to His Majesty's navy under service conditions. Since its foundation the school has trained about 1200 boys and musicians and formed fifty-three bands now serving afloat in various ships. These bands are string and wind bands, and they vary

in size from eleven to twenty-four musicians, according to the status of the ship.

At the present moment there are under instruction at Eastney about four hundred pupils. They are looked after by a teaching staff of twenty-three civilian professors. Boys recruited from good schools—not reformatories—are admitted at Eastney between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. Each boy, when he joins, is required to play on one instrument all major and minor scales as well as a test piece graded in difficulty according to his age. He must be ready for sea by the time he is eighteen: that is to say, he must show his fitness for becoming a bandsman by passing an examination under the musical director of the school. He is assessed at this examination as “fair,” “good,” or “very good,” and the two latter qualifications carry with them an increase in pay. Before serving afloat each musician must also pass examinations in Infantry Drill, Swimming, and First Aid: for musicians are rated as marines and are trained for the hospital staff, which they are obliged to join in action.

A candidate for the rank of corporal must satisfy the musical director in elementary conducting, harmony, and instrumentation, the latter implying a knowledge of the compass

and pitch of each string and wind instrument and a practical ability to teach one. A candidate for the post of bandmaster must go through a twelve months' course under the musical director and pass an examination held by the Royal Academy of Music. He must qualify in harmony, conducting, general musicianship, and scoring for military and orchestral bands, show a practical knowledge of all string and wind instruments used in naval bands, and prove himself a capable performer on at least one wind and one stringed instrument.

All naval bandsmen are now British subjects, and the work that is done by them and by the bandsmen of the army goes to prove what can be done under State-regulated systems, and to show to what an extent native talent is capable of exploitation and development.

CHAPTER V

FESTIVALS

The Festival of the Sons of the Clergy—The Three Choirs—Birmingham—Norwich—The Handel Festival—Leeds—Bristol—Hovingham—North Staffordshire—Cardiff—Sheffield—Newcastle—The Musical League—Influence of the Festivals on the output of new works and the maintenance of high standards—Hovingham and local needs—Music and charity—The triennial system—Festivals and church music—Modern tendencies.

AMONG modern forms of public music-making the musical festival is almost the oldest, and from its long association with religion and charity certainly the most venerable. Though not in practice confined to this country, it is a form of entertainment that has taken a peculiarly firm and lasting hold upon the affections of English people; and the discontinuance of many once flourishing meetings has had no weakening effect. The principal functions have maintained an astonishing degree of vitality from their earliest inception down to the present day, and enough new undertakings have arisen in recent years to show that the

festival habit is still vigorous in this country. The festivals may therefore claim ample consideration. They will be dealt with in the order of their inception, and after what has been done at each important gathering, especially during the last few years, has been noted, it should be possible to summarise the position and estimate their value as a means of promoting the advancement of music under modern conditions.

The Festival of the Sons of the Clergy is the oldest in existence and dates back to the foundation of the Institution itself in 1665. This Festival is held annually, and consists of a choral service and sermon. For more than two hundred years it has been held in St. Paul's Cathedral, and it is expressly given, like most of its successors, in the cause of charity. It is sufficiently venerable to demand brief notice, but, though curious and interesting, it is not, musically speaking, of any special significance. From 1698 to 1843 the service was given with instrumental accompaniment, which was resumed again after an interval of thirty years in 1873, and has lasted up to the present day. Latterly modern compositions have been introduced, some of them being written on purpose, but during the greater part of its

existence the Festival of the Sons of the Clergy has exploited only the *Te Deum in D* of Purcell, the *Utrecht* and *Dettingen Te Deums* of Handel, the Overture to *Esther*, the *Hallelujah Chorus*, and two anthems expressly composed for it by Dr. William Boyce. Improvements in this very restricted field were primarily due to Sir John Goss after his appointment to the organistship of St. Paul's in 1838.

The Festival of The Three Choirs—Gloucester, Worcester, and Hereford—dates from 1724, since which year it has existed for the purposes of charity. It originated in annual visits of a more or less informal nature which the musical societies of the three cathedral cities paid to one another. Later it assumed a more formal and important shape with the introduction of a plan to collect funds for necessitous clergy and needy members of the three cathedral choirs, and, as the musical needs of the gathering grew, an initial lesson in the cause of art for art's sake was given, but only partially taken to heart: the members of the three choirs were debarred from the privileges of the charity, which was reserved for the orphans of the local clergy—a curious perversion of the fitting object of a fund raised

by musical endeavour. All through its history the Three Choirs' Festival has been specially mindful of the claims of native effort. During the closing years of the last century it was the means of introducing to the world the following works: Sullivan's *Prodigal Son* (1869); Parry's *De Profundis* (1891) and *Job* (1892); Stanford's *Festival Overture* (1877), *Battle of the Baltic* (1891) and *Last Post* (1900); Cowen's *Ruth* (1887), *Transfiguration* (1895), *Magnificat* (1897), and *Te Deum* (1900); Mackenzie's *The Bride* (1881); Elgar's *Froissart Overture* (1890), *Black Knight* (1893), and *Lux Christi* (1896). In recent years the Festival has produced Walford Davies' *The Temple* (1902) and *Noble Numbers* (1909); Cowen's *Indian Rhapsody* (1903); Holbrooke's *Dreamland* (1906); Coleridge-Taylor's *The Atonement* (1903); Granville Bantock's *Witch of Atlas* (1902), *The Time Spirit* (1904), *The Soul's Ransom* (1906), *The Pierrot of the Minute* (1908), and *Old English Suite* (1909); Parry's *Voces Clamantium* (1903), *The Love that casteth out Fear* (1904), *Beyond these Voices there is Peace* (1908), Elgar's *Wand of Youth*, No. 2 (1908), and *Go, Song of Mine* (1909); and Delius's *Orchestral Dance Rhapsody* (1909). In 1899 Horatio Parker's *Hora Novissima*,

the first American work to be given at an English festival, was heard at Worcester, where three years later Richard Strauss was introduced to festival audiences by the performance of his symphonic poem *Tod und Verklärung*. César Franck's *Beatitudes* was given at the same city in 1905, and in 1909 Schubert's *Lazarus*, an Easter cantata written in 1820, received its first English hearing at Hereford.

The Birmingham Festival originated in 1768 in a desire to increase the finances of the Birmingham General Hospital. Now a triennial function, the Festival was held somewhat fitfully in its early years, but it speedily took rank as a music-meeting of primary importance, and, continuing to devote its proceeds to charity, has enriched the General Hospital by more than £100,000. Dr. Crotch, Samuel Wesley, and Sir Michael Costa preceded Dr. Richter in the position of conductor, but the greatest name in connection with the Festival is that of Mendelssohn, who conducted *St. Paul* here in 1837 and especially wrote *Elijah* for the meeting of 1846. Other foreign composers of note who brought out works at Birmingham were Gounod, represented by *The Redemption* (1882) and *Mors et Vita*

(1885), and Dvořák, whose *Spectre's Bride* (1885) was followed by his *Requiem* in 1891. Native works produced at Birmingham comprise Costa's *Eli* (1855) and *Naaman* (1846); Cowen's *Corsair* (1876) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1885); Gaul's *Holy City* (1882) and *Joan of Arc* (1887); Stanford's *Three Holy Children* (1885), *Eden* (1891) and *Requiem* (1897); Parry's *Judith* (1888) and *King Saul* (1894); Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* (1900), *The Apostles* (1903), and *The Kingdom* (1906); and Granville Bantock's *Omar Khayyám*, Part I in 1906, and Part III in 1909. The first programme was entirely Handelian in its composition and for many years the music of Handel predominated, *The Messiah* being given in 1885—the first year of Dr. Richter's rule—as nearly as possible as the composer intended. In 1909 a significant change was made, and *The Messiah* gave place to *Judas Maccabæus*. This was emphatically a step in the right direction, for *The Messiah* has dominated Festival programmes long enough, and there is no reason why it should continue to do so to the neglect of Handel's other oratorios, though, as far as Birmingham is concerned, there is every ground for the retention of the rival national idol, *Elijah*.

As Birmingham is inseparably associated with Mendelssohn, so Norwich can boast of its connection with Spohr, who conducted his *Calvary* there in 1839 and would, if possible, have directed the performance of the *Fall of Babylon* in 1842. The Norwich meeting was established on its present triennial basis in 1824, but it goes back intermittently as far as 1770. English works produced at Norwich during recent years are Cowen's *Saint Ursula* (1881), *Water Lily* (1893), and *Coronation Ode* (1902); Goring Thomas's *Sun Worshipers* (1881); Gaul's *Una* (1893); Mackenzie's *Rose of Sharon* (1884) and *London Day by Day* (1902); Stanford's *Elegiac Ode* (1884) and *Phaudrig Crohoore* (1896); Parry's *L'Allegro* (1890) and *Pied Piper* (1905), and Elgar's *Sea Pictures* (1899). In 1908 Mr. Henry J. Wood succeeded Mr. Randegger as conductor, and infused fresh life into a function that had been showing signs of decay. The point will be considered later: for the present it is sufficient to note that Mr. Wood concerned himself more with the task of bringing the Festival up to date than with the production of novelties. He performed, however, a number of standard works, of which the most important was Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*.

The Handel Festival was first held in its present form at the Crystal Palace in 1857. This musical event is so well known that a detailed history of it would be superfluous. Moreover, it would resolve itself into a mere list of the numbers given on successive Selection days. Notable dates in the history of the Festival are 1883, when Mr. August Manns conducted in succession to Sir Michael Costa, and 1903, when the direction passed into the hands of Dr. Cowen. The Festival raises the whole wearisome question of the influence of Handel upon English creative effort, but fortunately it is no longer necessary to argue that the day for the paramount influence of Handel, as of Mendelssohn, is past. There remain only the questions of the effect of the Handel Festival in popularising works less familiar than *The Messiah* and *Israel in Egypt*, and of the possibility of exacting from so large a body of singers interpretations calculated to impress as much by their subtlety as their weight. As to the first point, there can be little doubt that in the interests of Handel himself it would be well if the public would consent to a close season for *The Messiah* and so allow the other oratorios to make their full effect. The unconnected excerpts given on

Selection days exert too fragmentary an influence in this direction. The way to a better system was indicated in 1900, when their heterogeneous character was lessened by the inclusion of two parts of *Judas Maccabæus*. As to the second point, Dr. Cowen, entering into the fruits of his predecessors' labours, and having under his direction a body of singers much better trained than any they had, showed in 1909 how thoroughly and successfully the work of his forces might be directed towards subtlety, and did much to remove the stock reproach of megalomania. It had long been felt that a performance by such a force in an auditorium so large as the central transept of the Crystal Palace was only suitable to works as direct in their appeal and as broad in their effect as those of Handel. The inclusion last year of *Elijah* and *The Hymn of Praise*, reinforced by the uniform refinement of Dr. Cowen's readings, showed clearly how mistaken the earlier view had been, and indicated in no uncertain fashion the possibility of widening the scope of the Festival. Of course there is a financial difficulty in the way. As at present constituted the Handel Festival undeniably pays, and it is not at all certain that the public would go to Sydenham to attend it if the

music provided were materially altered. But should it prove possible to improve upon the stereotyped programme by performing other works of Handel, and still more by including those of other and more modern composers, there would be a reasonable prospect of transforming the Festival into a meeting more capable of exerting an influence in conformity with modern needs.

The Leeds Festival, the next important meeting to be founded, dates from the opening of the Leeds Town Hall in 1858. Sterndale Bennett, Costa, Sullivan, and Sir C. V. Stanford have successively filled the post of conductor; and the profits, sometimes amounting to more than £3000, have been given to local charities. The Festival has been distinguished throughout by the excellence of the choral singing and has been the means of introducing to the public the following works:—Sterndale Bennett's *May Queen* (1858); Sullivan's *Martyr of Antioch* (1880) and *Golden Legend* (1886); Mackenzie's *Story of Sayid* (1886) and *Witch's Daughter* (1904); Parry's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day* (1889) and *Invocation of Music* (1895); Stanford's *Revenge* (1886), *Voyage of Maeldune* (1889), *Te Deum* (1898), and *Stabat Mater* (1907); Elgar's *Caractacus* (1898); Coleridge-

Taylor's *Blind Girl of Castel-Cuillé* (1901); Holbrooke's *Queen Mab* (1904); Walford Davies's *Everyman* (1904); and one notable work by a foreign composer, Dvořák's *Saint Ludmila* (1886). Other novelties by Barnby, Barnett, Cellier, Cliffe, Corder, Cowen, Creser, Alan Gray, Macfarren, Somervell, and Charles Wood have been given at different times, and works — either entirely new or new to this country—by Raff, Massenet, Grieg, Humperdinck, and Glazounow have been performed. Dr. Joachim has taken part in the Festival, and among important revivals remaining to be noticed are those of Bach's great *Mass in B minor* in 1886 under the direction of Sir Arthur Sullivan, and of Beethoven's *Mass in D*, which marked the first year of Sir C. V. Stanford's conductorship (1901). Recently, however, the programmes have not fully met the wishes and tastes of the district; the chorus has not come up to the standard set at Sheffield; the performances have suffered from the absence of a permanent orchestra, and in consequence there has been a decided drop in the receipts. The scheme drawn up for 1910 may do something to remove the first of these defects; the chorus also, in spite of the whole-hearted enthusiasm its members showed under

their old constitution, may be improved by being recruited from a wider area than that of Leeds. But the third source of weakness remains; and it is to be hoped the authorities will see their way to follow the example of Sheffield and engage a body of instrumentalists accustomed to playing regularly together. Furthermore it is essential to the best results that the conductor should be thoroughly well known to his orchestra and that there should be between the two a more complete understanding than is possible under the present arrangement.

A triennial meeting of considerable importance has been held at Bristol since 1873. *The Messiah* has been given on each occasion, and *Elijah* has only been omitted once. Sir Charles Hallé conducted up till 1893, and was succeeded by Mr. George Riseley. Notable performances have been given of Mendelssohn's *Walpurgis Night* and Brahms's *Rinaldo* (1879); Handel's *Belshazzar* (1888); Schumann's *Paradise and the Peri* (1893); Gounod's *Requiem Mass* and Brahms's *German Requiem* (1896); Mendelssohn's *Antigone* and Horatio Parker's *Legend of St. Christopher* (1902); Mozart's *Mass in C minor*, Berlioz's *Lelio*, Mendelssohn's *Ædipus at Colonus*, and Strauss's *Tail-*

lefer (1905); Stanford's *Wellington Ode*, Max Bruch's *Lay of the Bell*, Kalinnikoff's *Symphony in G minor*, Elgar's *King Olaf*, and Wagner's *Die Walküre* (1908). Macfarren's *John the Baptist* (1873), and Mackenzie's *Jason* (1882), were specially composed for this Festival, which, it will be noticed, has not specially devoted itself to the production of novelties.

The Hovingham Festival, which was founded by Canon Pemberton (then Hudson) in 1886, exhibits special features of unique interest. It began with a single performance of *The Messiah*, which was so successful, in spite of the limited resources available, that Canon Pemberton decided to attempt *Elijah*, repeating *The Messiah*, and adding also a concert of a miscellaneous character. From that undertaking the Hovingham Festival took definite form, and continued at somewhat irregular intervals, but nominally on an annual basis, for twenty years. The meeting has owed its uniform success to the energy of the conductor, Canon Pemberton, the honorary secretary, Mrs. Fraser, the interest of the two succeeding Squires of Hovingham, the late and the present Sir William Worsley, and the active sympathy of Mr. John Rutson, whose financial help guaranteed the undertaking against loss

until it was strong enough to be self-supporting. Its sole object—that of music for music's sake—has been maintained with steadfast enthusiasm with no thought of making money for charity or any other cause ; and it has been loyally supported by Dr. Joachim, who attended three times without prospect of fee or reward to perform Beethoven's *Violin Concerto*, and once at least made the journey from Berlin with no other object than to assist Canon Pemberton. Important works given at Hovingham from time to time include four Concertos and two Cantatas of Bach ; three Concertos, three Symphonies, two Overtures, and the *C major Mass* of Beethoven ; the *Requiem*, *Song of Destiny*, *C minor Trio*, and *Sonata for Violin and Pianoforte* of Brahms ; Dvořák's *Spectre's Bride* and *Stabat Mater* ; Mackenzie's *Britannia Overture* ; Mendelssohn's *Walpurgis Night* ; Mozart's *G minor*, *E flat*, and *Jupiter Symphonies* ; Parry's *Judith* and *Blest Pair of Sirens* ; Stanford's *Revenge*, *Three Holy Children*, *Te Deum*, and *Last Post* ; Sullivan's *Golden Legend* ; and Verdi's *Requiem*. Occupying a unique position amongst provincial festivals, the Hovingham meeting has not concerned itself specially with the introduction of novelties, but it has produced new

works by Alan Gray, Edward Naylor, Tertius Noble, Arthur Somervell, and Charles Wood. The essentially rural character of the thinly peopled district in which the gathering is held has precluded the possibility of relying entirely on local help, but Canon Pemberton, when forced to go afield, has sought assistance as far as possible in York, Leeds, and the West Riding generally. The special significance of the Hovingham Festival will be referred to later. It is a splendid monument of what can be made out of small beginnings and apparently unpromising material. It is also a striking testimonial to the power of genuine enthusiasm inspired by an active worker. Unfortunately, since the practical retirement of Canon Pemberton only one festival has been held. Since 1906 the meeting has been in abeyance, and the prospects of its revival are decidedly doubtful. But it has not so far been officially discontinued, and therefore, when due regard is paid to its unique features and strong educative influence, it is to be hoped that some means will be found for securing its continued existence.

The North Staffordshire Festival, which came next in point of date, was the means of introducing Elgar's *King Olaf* in 1896 and

Coleridge-Taylor's *Death of Minnehaha* in 1899. The meeting was marked by the excellence of its choral singing, but it is now no longer in existence.

The Cardiff Festival, founded in 1892, marked a new departure as being the first Welsh festival, as distinct from the National and smaller Eisteddfodau. It has introduced Joseph Parry's *Saul of Tarsus* (1892); Stanford's *The Bard* (1895); Arthur Hervey's *On the Heights* and *On the March* (1902); Cowen's *John Gilpin*, German's *Welsh Rhapsody*, and Harry Evans's *The Victory of Saint Garmon* (1904); Hamilton Harty's *Ode to a Nightingale*, Granville Bantock's *Omar Khayyám*, Part II, Parry's *Vision of Life*, and Vaughan Williams's *Norfolk Rhapsody* (1907). Edgar Tinel's *Saint Francis* and César Franck's *The Beatitudes* were first heard in Great Britain at this festival, which, originally conducted by Sir Joseph Barnby, has been conducted since 1902 by Dr. F. H. Cowen. The London Symphony Orchestra was engaged for the meeting of 1907.

A very important festival was inaugurated at Sheffield in 1895. It has been marked from the very beginning by the excellence of the choral singing and the progressive nature

of the programmes put forward. The employment of a permanent body of orchestral players accustomed to act together has also done much to increase the value of the work, and has set an example which might well be followed elsewhere. The efforts of Dr. Coward as chorus master and Mr. Henry J. Wood as conductor, reinforced by adequate rehearsals and a disregard of unwise economies, have gone far to justify the claim made on behalf of this, the youngest of the big festivals, to be that of the highest artistic merit. The first meeting in 1895, being only experimental in nature, consisted of a single performance of *Elijah*: its success, however, was sufficiently great to admit of a triennial festival on the usual scale being inaugurated in 1896. Sir August Manns conducted the second and third functions, at which Sullivan's *Golden Legend*, Parry's *Job* and *King Saul*, Elgar's *King Olaf*, Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*, Berlioz's *Faust* and Saint-Saëns's *Samson and Delilah* were given. Mr. Wood conducted in 1902, introduced Dr. Coward's *Gareth and Linet*, gave the first English performance of Richard Strauss's *Sturmlied* and Volbach's *Easter* (specially rewritten for the Festival), and directed also Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens*,

Elgar's *Gerontius*, Cowen's *Ode to the Passions*, and Brahms's *Triumphlied*. The year 1905 was marked by the appearance of Herr Weingartner as conductor. His Symphony was given, as well as Mozart's *Requiem*: and two native works, *Fly, Envious Time*, by Mr. Nicholas Gatty, and *Ode to the North-East Wind*, by Mr. Frederick Cliffe, were introduced. The programme of the last meeting in 1908, at which Mr. Wood again conducted, was of a very comprehensive character. The only novelty of native origin was Mr. Frederick Delius's *Sea Drift*, but opportunity was given to hear César Franck's *The Beatitudes*, Berlioz's *Te Deum*, Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*, Debussy's *L'Enfant Prodigue*, Verdi's *Manzoni Requiem*, and, for the first time in England, the suite from Rimsky-Korsakoff's opera *Christmas Eve*. It should be added that this Festival, like that of Cardiff, exists for music only, and has no connection with charity.

The Newcastle-on-Tyne Festival, inaugurated in 1909, was something in the nature of a revival. Festivals had been given previously at Newcastle under the direction of Sir George Smart: but as this particular form of activity had been in abeyance in the Tyneside district for nearly a century, last year's under-

taking may be regarded as a new departure. Dr. Coward and M. Safonoff, the conductors-in-chief, directed a choir of 350 voices, supported by the London Symphony Orchestra. Five new works were introduced, three of them being by native composers. These were Mr. E. L. Bainton's *Prometheus*, Mr. Rutland Boughton's *Invincible Armada*, Mr. A. von Ahn Carse's *G minor Symphony*, Signor Busoni's *Concerto for Pianoforte, Orchestra, and Male Voice Choir*, and a tone-poem, *Salome*, by the American writer Mr. Henry Hadley, which had been given at the Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts a few weeks previously. The Festival was also the means of reviving *The Return of Tobias*, an oratorio by Haydn previously unknown in England, and of producing for the first time in this country Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Ballad of the Doom of Oleg*. The success of the meeting can be judged from the fact that it resulted in a profit of some £200 or £300, which would have been larger by about £800, if it had not been necessary to spend that sum in converting a theatre into a temporary concert hall.

There remains only one festival to be considered, that which was held at Liverpool in September, 1909, under the auspices of The

Musical League. This association, modelled on the pattern of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein, was founded in 1908 with the express object of promoting musical activity in England by holding an annual festival at a different town each year, by producing new works of native origin and reviving older works that have fallen into unmerited neglect, and by making use at each festival of local organisations and local musicians. Sir Edward Elgar is the President of the League, and Mr. Frederick Delius its Vice-President. The committee includes Messrs. Thomas Beecham, Granville Bantock, Henry Coward, Harry Evans, Arthur Fagge, Allen Gill, W. G. McNaught, Landon Ronald, and Henry J. Wood, so that the progressive character of the organisation is assured. Originally the rules of the League provided that no work by a member of the committee should be brought forward. The abrogation of this wise provision has removed a strong guarantee of the comprehensiveness of future programmes and somewhat shaken public confidence as to the probable policy of the League. Last year's meeting at Liverpool consisted of a chamber concert, an orchestral concert, and a choral and orchestral concert at which the Liverpool

Welsh Choral Union assisted. Mr. Harry Evans acted as honorary conductor. New works by Messrs. Frederic Austin, Arnold Bax, Havergal Brian, Frank Bridge, Joseph Hathaway, and Vaughan Williams were given: other British composers represented were Edward Agate, W. H. Bell, Frederick Delius, Balfour Gardiner, Percy Grainger, Joseph Holbrooke, J. B. McEwen, Cyril Scott, and Miss Ethel Smyth: and the programme included Debussy's *Nocturnes*, Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Antar Symphony*, and Bach's Cantata *Praise Jehovah*.

I have given special prominence in this brief survey to the production of new works, because it is in virtue of this particular enterprise that the big festivals can claim to constitute a national, rather than a local, asset. In the past they have done good service to the cause of music generally by stimulating such foreign composers as Mendelssohn, Gounod, and Dvořák to fresh activity. But their influence on native composers is naturally more important, and all the more so that they have special opportunities for encouraging British musicians. They depend largely on subscriptions, and, having got them, can afford to take financial risks that would be impossible in

London, where the festival habit is practically non-existent and new works can only be ventured on by associations which are high in public favour. Perhaps it is scarcely necessary to add that the provincial festivals maintain a high standard of performance and give local audiences opportunities of hearing the best artists, choirs, and orchestras, and of studying the methods of the best conductors. But in these respects, as well as in the production of novelties, their essential value is declining with the growth of enterprise in London and in the provinces themselves. The increasing musical activity of the metropolis is robbing the festivals of their peculiar attractiveness to the wealthier classes, who can hear all that they want in London at other seasons of the year ; and the multiplication of concerts in the chief provincial centres all the year round is going far to minimise the special charm of the festival in the case of local audiences.

Where a festival meets a definite need it is hard to over-estimate its influence for good. This is the case with the Three Choirs' Festival, held in towns not otherwise remarkable for musical activity, and to be regarded practically as an annual function in view of the close proximity of Gloucester, Worcester, and Here-

ford. It is, or rather was, still more the case at Hovingham, where a frequently recurring musical meeting spread a knowledge and love of music over a district otherwise entirely unprovided for. This was the chief glory of the Hovingham Festival, and gave it a unique position and an ample justification for its existence. The lesson taught by this obscure north-country village is being repeated to-day in Germany, where the older festivals, having served their purpose, are being discontinued, and new ones are springing up in districts that really want them; so it is clear that up to a point a festival does good by creating a demand, but when the demand is created and then met by other forms of enterprise, the festival, especially if is held at long intervals of three years, tends to become an unnecessary luxury and to lose its vitality.

From a purely musical standpoint the provincial festivals are open to a grave objection in the fact that most of them exist for charitable purposes. A charitable object means that a purely musical meeting exists for other than purely musical ends, and consequently tends to take on something of the character of a social function. It means possibly that unwise economies are practised to the detriment of the

performances, and it results certainly in a scale of prohibitive prices which seriously restricts the local value of the functions by excluding the poorer classes. In this respect the festivals are an anachronism ; art is no longer dependent on aristocratic patronage but on democratic support, and the attempt to serve two masters—music and charity—must result at least in partial failure.

The triennial system, again, is not progressive, for it provides too much at a time, provokes the constant repetition of what is familiar and sure to “draw,” and results in the neglect of much modern work, which is heard once, but never repeated. The better way is shown by the competitive meetings which provide stimulating work for those that need it all the year round, avoid monotonous repetitions, and give to thousands an opportunity of hearing music at short and regular intervals and at popular prices.

Finally, the festivals have tended too much to perpetuate the Church style, especially in the older meetings where the influence of the cathedral has been paramount. To say this much is not to repeat the cheap and foolish sneer at the atmosphere of the organ-loft, but only to emphasise the fact that English Church

music, though a national inheritance which we do well to maintain in its dignified severity and to protect against meretricious and corrupting influences from outside, is not at the present day all-sufficing. Catholicity is to be aimed at, since music in England has got beyond the sphere of the Church and is moving strongly in other directions. To opera especially the oratorio cult is decidedly inimical, and we have set oratorio on such a pedestal that there appears at first sight some incongruity in mentioning the two art-forms in close connection. Yet they are not irreconcilable, and are, in fact, drawing closer together with the growth of the spirit which aims at individual characterisation rather than the illustration of outward incidents. There is, therefore, no longer any reason why opera should not take its place beside oratorio as a fit field for exploitation in festival programmes. The experiment has been tried at Bristol and has proved eminently successful.

One lesson has been taught at Hovingham; another was enforced in 1908 at Norwich, where prices were lowered all round and programmes put forward representing every phase of modern music, with the result that increased receipts secured a credit balance instead of a

deficit. The reform was badly needed, for the *raison d'être* of the old type of festival is going. It is not important that these functions should be chronicled in London, but it is of supreme importance that their local influence should be strong and stimulating; and that result can only be attained when they exist solely for music and become modern, educative, and, above all, cheap.

CHAPTER VI

CONCERTS

Private recitals—Royal Choral Society—London Choral Society—Mr. Mason's Choir—Queen's Hall and Alexandra Palace Choral Societies—August Manns—Ganz—Richter—The Philharmonic Society—Queen's Hall Orchestra—London and New Symphony Orchestras—Mr. Beecham's Orchestra—Amateur societies—Chamber music—National Sunday League—Railway Societies—Provincial concerts—Birmingham—Eastbourne—Sheffield—Liverpool—Manchester.

LONDON CONCERTS.—Considered as performances to which the public pay for the right of entry, concerts are comparatively modern institutions, and date back in this country only to the closing years of the seventeenth century. Even so, it would be a work of great difficulty and little interest to review them all, and I shall confine myself almost entirely to those associations which are still in existence, and—in a work designedly concerned with modern music and its outlook—make little attempt to trace a line of gradual progress from one undertaking to another. Private recitals must necessarily be

neglected ; but the fact that they have doubled in quantity in the last ten years, and are quite ten times as numerous now as they were at the beginning of the last century, is exceedingly significant. Though very many of them exhibit a standard of artistic merit insufficient to justify their existence, there is a certain element of hopefulness in the fact that they are given at all. It points at least to a measure of activity in the schools, resulting in an annual output of artists, serious and ambitious if occasionally ill-equipped ; and the amount of success they command is of less moment here than the degree of encouragement afforded by their mere existence.

In dealing with the performance of larger bodies I shall consider first those which are devoted to choral work, and here the Royal Choral Society demands the first mention. This Society was founded in 1871 by Charles Gounod, and was incorporated in the following year with Barnby's Choir. Up till 1888 it was known as the Royal Albert Hall Choral Society, but assumed its present style in that year by royal command. Up till 1896 the Society was conducted by Sir Joseph Barnby, since that year by Sir Frederick Bridge. The Society has given performances of the chief

choral works of Bridge, Coleridge-Taylor, Cowen, Elgar, Mackenzie, Parry, Stanford, and Sullivan, and has also given, among other foreign works, the great Masses of Bach and Beethoven, Benoit's *Lucifer*, Goetz's beautiful setting of Psalm cxxxvii, Henschel's *Stabat Mater*, Parker's *Hora Novissima*, Schubert's *Song of Miriam*, and Wagner's *Parsifal*. Its enterprise in the matter of novelties is seriously restricted by financial considerations, for new British works at Kensington do not pay; indeed, each one results in an average loss of about £250, and the balance is only redressed by *The Messiah* and *Elijah*. Matters were better twenty-five years ago, but the growth of orchestral bodies and of new choral societies giving concerts in Central London has brought about a change. Yet the flourishing society at the Alexandra Palace suffers from the same disabilities. So it is permissible to add another reason which is sometimes alleged—the impossibility of adequately performing complicated or delicate choral works with so large a choir in so large a building; and, indeed, the acoustic properties of the Albert Hall leave much to be desired. On the other hand, the same argument has often been put forward in extenuation of Handel Festival short-

comings, but Dr. Cowen showed last year how little weight it carried.

The London Choral Society completed its sixth season in May, 1909. It is conducted by Mr. Arthur Fagge, and was founded to produce new choral works, preferably by native composers, or to revive older works that have been unjustly neglected in the metropolis, such for instance as *The Dream of Gerontius*, which had to wait three years before it was given in London. Commercialism has no share in the policy of the Society, which has given performances of Brahms's *German Requiem*; Bantock's *Omar Khayyám*; Cowen's *John Gilpin*; Walford Davies's *Everyman*; Elgar's *Caractacus*, *The Kingdom*, and *The Apostles*; Julius Harrison's *Cleopatra*; Parry's *Pied Piper*; and Charlton Speer's *Battle of the Lake Regillus*.

A similar aim animates the members of Mr. Edward Mason's Choir, which exists to produce new British works. At the second concert in March, 1909, Edgar Bainton's *Blessed Damozel*, Rutland Boughton's *Skeleton in Armour*, and A. M. Goodhart's *Spanish Armada* were given. The newly formed Queen's Hall Choral Society similarly produces new British works, but is also concerned

to introduce foreign works unknown in this country. The double object was kept in view at the first concert in March, 1909, when performances were given, under the direction of Signor Franco Leoni, of Paul Puget's *Ulysses and the Sirens*, E. Meyer-Helmund's *Forest Song*, and Hubert Bath's *Wedding of Shon Maclean*. This programme and a second one, which included Mr. G. H. Clutsam's *Quest of Rapunzel*, sufficiently indicated a distinguishing desire to pay special attention to the lighter side of choral music.

No special object, other than a desire to give concerts that will pay, animates the Alexandra Palace Choral Society, and considering the distance of the Alexandra Palace from London and the consequent lack of patronage it obtains in most respects, it is exceedingly gratifying that the concerts attain the desired end. Mr. Allen Gill, the conductor, has brought his forces to such a pitch of excellence that they may proudly claim to be the finest choral body in the metropolitan district. The choir must, however, pay or cease to exist; consequently its ambitions are limited by financial considerations. Yet Mr. Allen Gill has created a demand, and so educated his audiences to appreciate uniformly excellent choral work

that they will come to hear such works as the *B minor Mass* of Bach. The Mass has found a place in the list of works performed during the present season, others of note being Elgar's *Apostles*, Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and *Israel in Egypt*, Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha*, and Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*. It was originally intended to include Handel's *Solomon*, but the idea had to be abandoned and a more familiar work substituted on commercial grounds—another argument against the tyrannous popularity of some two or three of Handel's works and the consequent impossibility of arranging for adequate performances of others.

The striking increase of orchestral activity during recent years in London is due in a very large measure to the public appreciation created and fostered by Mr. Henry J. Wood and the Queen's Hall Orchestra. But it would be unjust in giving due credit to this and other recent organisations to overlook the work of the pioneers into whose labours modern conductors have entered. Foremost among them was August Manns, who inaugurated the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts in 1855 and controlled them till their discontinuance after the season of 1900. Manns almost created a love of orchestral music in London, for his

concerts appealed to a wider public than had been reached by other organisations. He was largely instrumental in popularising Schubert and Schumann, was quick to introduce at Sydenham important works that had made an impression abroad, and, above all, lost no opportunity of encouraging native composers. He gave performances of the principal works of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Brahms, Raff, Rubinstein, Goetz, Smetana, and Wagner. The programmes of the first forty seasons contain 1550 compositions, representing over 300 composers of whom almost exactly one-third were British. His very activity and enthusiasm brought about the decay of the concerts he had established, for through the growing knowledge and appreciation fostered by him new organisations sprang up in Central London and the public ceased to take weekly journeys to Sydenham. Yet he had his reward, for his influence on orchestral work and native effort was invaluable.

Mention must also be made of the New Philharmonic Society, founded in 1852 and conducted during its first season by Berlioz, later by Dr. Henry Wylde, and finally by a still living musician, Mr. Wilhelm Ganz. The Society made a special feature of the introduc-

tion of works by modern and native composers. It ceased to exist in 1879, but its work was carried on till 1883 by Mr. Ganz's Orchestral Concerts.

Another series of concerts, which has now been practically discontinued in London, is that which sprang from the Wagner Festival of 1877 and was controlled by Dr. Richter. Since Dr. Richter went to Manchester in 1897, his appearances in London have been all too infrequent. The merits of the performances he directs are too well known to require mention, but it is necessary to emphasise the invaluable work which he did in London in popularising the music of Wagner.

Older than any of the institutions just mentioned, the Philharmonic Society was founded in 1813. Its history is as splendid as it is long, for the concerts, of which there are seven each season, have been directed by Spohr, Weber, Mendelssohn, Wagner, and Sterndale Bennett, as well as the greatest native conductors of the present day. Works specially written for the Society are headed by Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*, and include also Mendelssohn's *Italian Symphony*, the *C minor Symphony* of Saint-Saëns, Mackenzie's *La Belle Dame sans Merci* and *Britannia Over-*

ture, Cowen's *Sinfonietta in A*, Parry's *English Symphony* and *Symphonic Variations*, Stanford's *Symphony in D minor* and *Suite for Violin and Orchestra*, Elgar's *Cockaigne Overture*, Cowen's *Pippa Passes*, W. H. Bell's *Mother Carey*, and Dora Bright's *Concerto*. In the past two seasons the Society's Orchestra has been conducted by Dr. Cowen, Henry J. Wood, Landon Ronald, Arthur Nikisch, Mancinelli, Camille Chevillard, and Bruno Walter, and the following English works have been performed:—Hamilton Harty's *Comedy Overture*, Edward German's *Symphonic Suite "The Seasons,"* Elgar's *Orchestral Variations* and *Symphony in A flat*, William Wallace's *François Villon*, Ethel Smyth's *Overture to The Wreckers*, Delius's *In a Summer Garden*, McEwen's *Grey Galloway*, and Arthur Hervey's *Summer*. No doubt, therefore, can be felt as to the encouragement offered to native effort by the Philharmonic Society; and its policy in this direction was emphasised at the first concert of the present season (1909-10), when Sir Edward Elgar conducted a programme of his own works.

Of more modern institutions the Queen's Hall Orchestra, under Mr. Henry J. Wood, is probably the most important and certainly

the most popular and educative. It is connected with three separate enterprises, the Queen's Hall Symphony Concerts, the Sunday Concert Society, and the annual Promenade Concerts, which constitute the greatest factor of the day in the spread of musical knowledge by means of orchestral efforts. The Symphony Concerts have existed since 1896: they performed Strauss's five Tone Poems in the season of 1902-3, and, besides introducing six novelties in the season of 1908-9, engaged as successive conductors Sir Edward Elgar, Mr. Granville Bantock, M. Jean Sibelius, M. Claude Debussy, and M. Vincent D'Indy, who made his first appearance in England on this occasion. The Promenade Concerts are almost too well known to need describing. Their influence is due to the fact that they meet a definite need, and prove that there is no necessity for a dead season in London, since it is clear that good music at popular prices will attract audiences even in August and September. Moreover, they have shown clearly that the London public, long reputed less enthusiastic in the cause of music than that of the provinces, is perfectly ready to respond to enterprise, and only lacks opportunity to show its interest in music. The level of the programmes is con-

sistently maintained, and a brief comparison between them and those that were provided a few years ago at Covent Garden is enough to show the general advance in public taste. It is true that the more serious works are followed, and rightly so, by numbers of a lighter nature, but it is no longer necessary to provide a Beethoven Symphony with antidotes in the shape of the worthless ballads and the still more inferior dance music that disfigured the programmes of the old Covent Garden "Promenades." This improvement in the standard of music performed and the manner of its performance has been accompanied by a progressive sympathy with modern music. Up to the end of the season of 1909 Mr. Wood introduced five hundred new works. In doing so, he has taught his audiences to understand and appreciate Strauss and Tchaikovsky, in which respect he has rendered a service analogous to that performed by Dr. Richter in the cause of Wagner. He has often been reproached for devoting too much attention to Russian music; but it is significant that of the first 225 novelties introduced, 75 were British, 41 German, and only 46 Russian, so that it is clear that the claims of native art at least have not been disregarded. The proportion of British

works was maintained in the season of 1909, when one-third of the forty-five novelties were by native composers; and this fact, together with the regular inclusion of Beethoven, Wagner, and Mozart, should be taken into account by those who noticed a manifest falling off in the number of symphonies by Schumann, Schubert, and Brahms last year. It is practically impossible that Mr. Wood should satisfy all tastes, and equally undesirable that he should be blamed for exploiting a school of music with which he is in obvious sympathy. There may be defects in the programmes provided, but no deficiencies can seriously minimise the value of a season of educative concerts some ten weeks long maintained for fifteen years in succession.

The London Symphony Orchestra is an offshoot of the Queen's Hall Orchestra, and consists of a number of players who seceded from the older organisation in 1904. Its constitution is in some respects peculiar, for it is run at the joint risk of the members, who share in the profits, have a voice in the management, and decline to place themselves under a permanent conductor. The last-named feature gives a peculiar value to the concerts given by this body, and educates the players in

ready responsiveness to the demands of a series of different conductors, such as those engaged for the present season—Dr. Richter, Mr. Safonoff, Mr. Nikisch, and Mr. Kussewitzky. The London Symphony Orchestra is not unmindful of its duty to the native composer, and last season brought forward works by Mr. Alick Maclean, Mr. George Dyson, and Mr. W. H. Bell. It has been engaged for numerous provincial festivals and concerts, and has successfully visited both Paris (1906) and Antwerp (1908).

The New Symphony Orchestra, as at present constituted under Mr. Landon Ronald, has won for itself a position out of all proportion to the length of its existence, for it is barely two seasons old. Six concerts were given by this body in the spring and summer of 1909, and at least one—in some cases more than one—new or unfamiliar work was included in each. A similar policy has distinguished the concerts of the ensuing winter season. The new British works brought forward or announced include Mr. William Wallace's *Villon*, Mr. Hamilton Harty's *Violin Concerto*, Sir C. V. Stanford's *Ode to Discord*, Mr. George Clutsam's *Lady of Shalott*, Mr. J. D. Davis's *Maid of Astolat*, a new version of Mr. Nicholas

Gatty's *Variations on Old King Cole*, Mr. St. John Johnson's *Coronach* and *Highland Gathering*, and Mr. Coleridge-Taylor's *From Africa*. First English performances have been given of Herr Georg Schumann's *Overture to a Drama* and *First Symphony*, while Sir Edward Elgar's *Symphony* has been played twice, and Sir C. V. Stanford's *Sixth Symphony*, written in honour of G. F. Watts, once. A feature of each programme has been the inclusion of a concerto, and this has been the means of introducing to a metropolitan audience at least one noted pianist, Herr Leonid Kreutzer. Work of this description accomplished in so short a time has successfully established the reputation of the orchestra and even increased that of Mr. Ronald, the only British conductor who has repeatedly directed the greatest European orchestras and achieved success in Berlin, Vienna, Rome, and Amsterdam. The New Symphony Orchestra is proving a strong rival to older organisations, and has taken the place of the London Symphony Orchestra at the Albert Hall Sunday Concerts. While it is controlled by Mr. Ronald it should go far, for it has a conductor who has fast risen to eminence and will undoubtedly lead as his position gives him the right to refuse to be led.

Mr. Thomas Beecham's Orchestra was originally founded as the New Symphony Orchestra in 1906. The present association dates only from last year, when it gave five concerts. Mr. Beecham's object is to pay special attention to native effort, and he has accordingly introduced the following British works:—Frederick Austin's *Spring*, Arnold Bax's *Into the Twilight*, W. H. Bell's *Arcadian Suite*, J. B. McEwen's *Grey Galloway*, Joseph Holbrooke's *Ulalume*, and two choral works—*Sea Drift* and *A Mass of Life*—by Mr. Frederick Delius, in which he was assisted by the North Staffordshire District Choral Society. Mr. Beecham has given also modern works by César Franck, Vincent D'Indy, Debussy, Rimsky-Korsakoff, and Tchaikovsky. He toured the provinces, largely as an exponent of Elgar's *Symphony*, in the autumn of 1909, but owing to the extension of his opera season at Covent Garden was obliged to abandon his projected tour in the spring of 1910, and defer the task of popularising British music in the United States.

It remains to be seen whether there is room for four first-class orchestras in London in addition to the Philharmonic Society: the number is large, but the growth of interest in

orchestral music has been so extraordinary of late that it is to be hoped that no one of them will be forced to discontinue its efforts.

No account of orchestral music in London would be complete without a reference, however slight, to the many societies which foster an active interest amongst amateurs. It is impossible to refer to them all, and I must be content merely to mention such leading organisations as the Royal Amateur, the Stock Exchange, and the Strolling Players' Societies. The influence exerted by such bodies is as great as it is obvious; and those societies which are less well known, and achieve through no fault of their own performances of less artistic merit, have at least the satisfaction of knowing that the value of their work is out of all proportion—may even be in inverse ratio—to the standard of their attainments.

Passing from orchestral to chamber music, it is necessary to refer first to the Popular Concerts, which, though now discontinued, are still fresh in the memory of concert-goers. They were instituted in 1859 by Messrs. Chappell and Co., and were held for six years on Monday evenings. In 1865 the Saturday afternoon rehearsals were thrown open to the public, and after an intermittent existence as

regular concerts with separate programmes, they were established on a definite and individual basis as "Saturday Pops" in 1876. Ultimately the twin series of concerts lost favour with the public, partly owing to the growth of younger organisations, but largely from the non-progressive character of the programmes put forward. Several attempts were made to galvanise them into fresh vitality, but they were finally given up in 1904.

The cessation of their valuable work left a distinct gap, which has been partially filled by the excellent series of Broadwood Chamber Concerts. These concerts have now been given for eight seasons. They have been animated by a wise and catholic spirit, have done much to encourage native executive artists, and have introduced many important British works, including Sir C. V. Stanford's Nonet, and quartets and quintets by Messrs. Cyril Scott, James Friskin, and Vaughan Williams. Chamber music is also exploited by the Classical Concert Society (formerly the Joachim Concerts Committee), and by several private individuals whose serious enterprises are too numerous for detailed mention.

The fashion for Sunday concerts, which forms so marked a feature of recent musical

development in London and threatens to exert a dangerous influence on the work done during the rest of the week, is largely due to an organisation with a continuous record of educative activity extending over the last five-and-twenty years. The National Sunday League was founded in 1885 by Mr. R. M. Morrell. His representations induced Lord Palmerston to allow Sunday performances by military bands in 1856, but the permission was shortly withdrawn in deference to the illiberal outcry of the churches of the day. The history of the movement and the difficulties it met and overthrew scarcely come within the scope of a review of modern musical activity. It is more to the purpose to relate that in the year ending in April, 1909, the League gave 511 concerts and 121 band performances in various parks. It is largely, if not wholly, due to the National Sunday League that military and London County Council bands are now playing on Sundays, so that, when its own performances are reckoned in, it is possible now to hear a band on Sunday in almost every park and open space in the metropolitan area. Increased facilities for getting out of London have resulted latterly in a slight diminution of public support, but the activity is still maintained and

will be continued till later in the year as soon as the London County Council bandstands are provided with artificial light.

In the matter of indoor concerts the League has again done the spade-work, and may claim much credit for the Albert Hall and Covent Garden enterprises now before the public. The conductor-in-chief to the League is Mr. Lyell Taylor, but its activity is not confined to Central London. In the less fashionable suburbs, symphonies, concertos, choral works, and concert performances of operas are given to crowded audiences at prices ranging from threepence to two shillings. The influence of London has spread to the provinces, where increasing liberality is being shown to Sunday music. At Brighton, for instance, the Town Council, having vetoed Sunday concerts in April, 1908, reversed its decision in the following November, and set an example that might well be followed in other places where steady opposition is maintained and defended by reference to an antiquated statute of 1781.

I have still to draw attention to those numerous musical organisations which are connected with industrial enterprises and not only exert a constant influence for good over all connected with them, but offer also a striking

instance of the innate impulse to combined musical energy in all corporate bodies of men. No stranger visiting for the first time a London competitive gathering can fail to be struck with the number of societies recruited from large commercial houses and with the excellence of their work. But it is clear that no individual firm can offer such opportunities for work on a large scale as the great railway companies provide, and railway organisations may be taken as the highest type of what—for want of a better term—may be termed industrial musical societies.

There are many of these societies in existence, such, for instance, as the Great Western Railway Musical Society, which is distinguished among its rivals by the admission of female members, and a Society, organised as an orchestra and a male-voice choir, recently formed in connection with the Railway Clearing-House. But on frankly personal grounds, because it is a body in which I am actively interested, I take the Great Eastern Railway Musical Society as a flourishing type of this particular form of organisation. This Society was founded by officers of the company, it is encouraged and financially supported by directors, and it is administered by a committee

representative of every department of the company's system. It consists of a choir and an orchestra, distinct bodies, but trained by the same conductor. Periodical concerts are given at the Liverpool Street Hotel, and the value of the work done is attested by the fact that it is being imitated; for, though a young body, this Society is both large and vigorous: it has given a decided impetus to its rivals through the comprehensiveness of its scale, and it is showing what can be accomplished by the active interest of the directors in promoting a better understanding between all who are actively interested in railway management.

PROVINCIAL CONCERTS.—As music in the provinces has already received a considerable amount of attention in the chapters given to festivals and municipal work, I shall not attempt an exhaustive account of provincial concerts, but be content with a brief mention of such provincial concert-giving associations as are specially important, typical, or instructive.

Excluding organ recitals and a few isolated fixtures, there are in Birmingham some two dozen bodies which give concerts with uniform regularity. In the circumstances it might be thought that the Festival had no special reason for existing, but it is significant that the

greater part of this musical enterprise is devoted to choral work, and is therefore largely in sympathy with the main objects of the triennial function. There are at least ten choral societies in the city, and the lesson which they teach as to the taste of the Birmingham public is reinforced by two facts, first that the Birmingham Concerts Society, with which is incorporated the Halford Orchestral Concerts and the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, is about to discontinue its efforts, secondly that the Promenade Concerts under Mr. Landon Ronald's direction, which have been held for the last five years at the Theatre Royal, have resulted in financial failure. The cheaper seats have been well filled, but the more expensive parts of the house have been ill patronised. These concerts exercise a very powerful influence, as Promenade Concerts conducted on modern lines are bound to do, and the standard of the music performed has been steadily and gradually improved. Whatever the reason for their failure, the conclusion to which it points is irresistible and not flattering to Birmingham, which at least does not appear to share in the striking growth of appreciation of orchestral music to be noticed elsewhere. It is, however,

satisfactory that the Promenade Concerts are not to be discontinued, and permissible to hope that their artistic merits will result in ultimate success. Birmingham is more enterprising in one other direction, for it supports an Amateur Operatic Society, to which the Students' Operatic Class of the Midland Institute is affiliated; but having done this, it gives such scanty support to a prominent operatic touring company as to prevent the continuance of its visits.

Orchestral music is better appreciated elsewhere. What is done at Bournemouth, already set out under the head of municipal enterprise, is paralleled at Eastbourne. Here the Duke of Devonshire's private orchestra may be heard every day, and performances of symphonies or chamber music are given once a week. Prices of admission are low, and a season ticket for twelve months may be obtained for a guinea. Sir Edward Elgar, Sir A. C. Mackenzie, Sir Charles Stanford and Messrs. Granville Bantock, F. H. Cowen, Edward German, and Coleridge-Taylor have conducted the orchestra in their own works, and quite recently Doctor Richter conducted a performance of Elgar's *Symphony*—the first to be given in the provinces after the initial production at Manchester.

Less fortunate in some respects than Bourne-mouth and Eastbourne, the city of Sheffield, known for some time past as a vigorous and progressive centre of musical life, has from force of circumstances directed mainly towards choral work those energies which have resulted in its important Festival. Much interest, therefore, attached to a recent attempt to widen the city's musical outlook by the provision of cheap orchestral concerts. Towards the end of last year two experimental Promenade Concerts were given in the Albert Hall, and an intention was expressed of instituting a regular series if the Sheffield public proved reasonably responsive. The scheme put forward by a working committee consisting of Mr. Willoughby Firth, Mr. T. Walter Hall, Mr. C. D. Leng, and Mr. J. A. Rodgers, the manager and conductor, was cast on definitely educative lines, and no thought of profit was allowed to interfere with its successful realisation. Everything possible was done to make the concerts an artistic success and to provide them at prices of continental cheapness. A competent local orchestra of about sixty players was engaged and adequately rehearsed; the greater part of the ground floor of the Albert Hall was arranged as a promenade ;

room was provided for fifteen hundred people holding shilling and sixpenny tickets; and a certain number of seats at half a crown was reserved for wealthier patrons. The two programmes contained Beethoven's *Fifth* and *Sixth Symphonies*, Liszt's *E flat Pianoforte Concerto*, Handel's *Fourth Organ Concerto*, Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien*, Smetana's *Bartered Bride Overture*, Sibelius's *Finlandia*, and various native compositions by Elgar, Mackenzie, German, and Roger Quilter. Audiences were large, appreciative, and—what is more important perhaps at Promenade Concerts—quiet; so that the committee should have little difficulty in establishing the desired series at popular prices. The suggestion made by one of the committee in a Sheffield journal that the Corporation should appropriate to these concerts a part of the sum hitherto spent on music in parks and recreation grounds is eminently reasonable. If adopted it will go far towards ensuring the stability of an enterprise which will provide Sheffield with orchestral music, and supply a valuable object lesson to other municipalities in sympathy with such high educative aims.

The two provincial cities which remain to be considered have done much in the cause of

music, but, though they have occasionally given festivals, they have never felt the need of them so far as to make them permanent. The chief musical agency at work in Liverpool is the Philharmonic Society. It has existed since 1840, and has been controlled by Sir Julius Benedict, Max Bruch, Sir Charles Hallé, and Dr. Cowen, the present conductor. During the past three seasons the Society has produced, among others, the following works :—Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Beethoven's *Fidelio* (in concert form), Schubert's *Mass in E flat*, Goetz's *Noenia*, Parry's *Judith*, Mackenzie's *Dream of Jubal*, Elgar's *The Apostles*, Beethoven's *Fourth Symphony*, Schumann's *Second Symphony*, Goetz's *Symphony in F major*, Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*, Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Scheherazade Suite*, and modern French works by César Franck and Vincent D'Indy. It will be seen from this list that the Society divides its attention fairly equally between choral and orchestral music, and it should be added that it draws about one-third of its instrumental players from Manchester.

Manchester itself, a city next in importance to London in musical activity, supports numerous concerts, of which the Hallé Concerts are the most important. These were preceded by

the Gentlemen's Concerts, which date back at least as far as 1745. They were controlled by Sir Charles Hallé from 1850 onwards, and are now directed by Mr. H. J. Wood. Eight concerts are given each season ; choral works are not exploited. The Hallé Concerts, which were inaugurated in 1857, are both more numerous and more educative in character than the older series. In recent years they have been the means, under Dr. Richter, of popularising much classical and modern music. Notable performances include the *Third* and *Fifth Brandenburg Concertos* of Bach, Granville Bantock's *Omar Khayyám*, Beethoven's *Third*, *Fifth*, and *Sixth Symphonies*, Berlioz's "*Harold in Italy*" *Symphony*, Brahms's *Third Symphony* and *German Requiem*, Elgar's *Gerontius*, Goldmark's *Violin Concerto*, Mozart's "*Jupiter*" *Symphony*, Schumann's *D minor Symphony No. 4*, Strauss's *Tod und Verklärung*, the *Fourth* and *Sixth* ("*Pathetic*") *Symphonies* of Tchaikovsky, and the *Symphony in D minor* of Volkmann. The first performance was given at these concerts of Sir Edward Elgar's *Symphony*, which is dedicated to the conductor, Dr. Richter. Prices of admission range from one shilling to seven-and-sixpence, and audiences number as many as three thousand. But the

concerts do not result in a decided financial success ; an annual profit of £100 on a turnover of about £1250 is considered remarkably good.

Excellent as Dr. Richter's work in Manchester has been, it is well to remember that at the time of his appointment the choice aroused much opposition. There could be no doubt of his pre-eminent fitness for the post of conductor. But it was felt—as I think, rightly—that the position should be held by an Englishman. Whatever justification there may have been at the time for the selection of a foreigner to control the chief concerts of a city that rivals London in musical energy, the continuance of the policy is open to grave objection. Dr. Richter's engagement will terminate in two years' time. There are several English conductors fully qualified to succeed him ; and if those in authority do not appoint one of them, they will lose a golden opportunity of encouraging native musicians, and will once more make themselves the laughing stock of discerning foreigners who appreciate, better than we do ourselves, the merits of our English conductors.

Before closing an account, sufficient to justify its object, but confined within very narrow

limits, it is as well, perhaps, to point out how much the orchestral work done in the provinces is indebted to London, since very many members of provincial orchestras are drawn from the metropolis. It may, however, be hoped that this state of things will pass with the growth of provincial universities and schools of music and the spread of the spirit which has provided—to quote two instances—a municipal orchestra at Leeds and a permanent orchestra at Bradford.

CHAPTER VII

MUSICAL SOCIETIES

The Worshipful Company of Musicians : its original aims and early history ; its recent activity in offering prizes ; the Tercentenary Exhibition ; various competitions ; *raison d'être* and opportunities for future usefulness—The Incorporated Society of Musicians : its foundation and constitution ; annual conferences ; performances of new works ; periodical reports and benevolent schemes ; contrast between aim and achievement—The Society of British Composers—The Musical Association—The Folk-Song Society—The Royal Society of Musicians.

THE universality of the appeal which music makes is nowhere more evident than in the impulse to combined effort which its practical performance inevitably fosters. But societies which exist for performance alone do not by any means exhaust the number of modern musical organisations. There are others which would demand some notice in the briefest conceivable survey, and among these that one which is the oldest, though not perhaps the most vigorous, may fittingly be considered first.

As at present constituted the Musicians'

Company is not of great age, for its charter dates only from 1604. In reality, however, it goes back much further, since it is the direct descendant of the Guilds of Minstrels which sprung successively into existence in mediæval times for the purpose of protecting competent native musicians against the unfair rivalry of "foreigners" and quacks. A charter granted by Edward IV to such a guild in 1469 is the earliest now in existence; but the fact that it contains a reference to the previous formation of similar guilds proves that the evils complained of were by no means new; and the subsequent complaints made by the Minstrels and Freemen of the City of London throughout the sixteenth century show also that the preventive measures adopted did not prove entirely effective. Accordingly fresh powers were sought and obtained in 1604; the charter of incorporation granted by King James I brought into existence the Worshipful Company of Musicians, and gave it full authority to regulate the teaching and performance of music in the City of London and its immediate environs. The loss of the Company's records makes it impossible to give any full or continuous account of its early activities. But the charter defines its powers, and certain facts in

its history have survived. We know that the Company exercised jurisdiction over musicians and dancing-masters and their apprentices ; that it had power to summon before it all teachers of music within a prescribed area, to license the competent and reject the unqualified ; that it admitted to membership—originally on payment of a reasonably small fee—such persons as seemed “meet and convenient for the worship of the city and the credit of the art” ; that it punished irregularities on the part of its members by fines which were applied to the relief of its own poor ; and that it exercised its powers as late as 1763, in which year it successfully sued one Barton Hudson for employing “foreigners”—that is, musicians who were not members of the Company—at a Lord Mayor’s banquet.

But whatever use the Company originally made of its powers, there is no doubt that in the nineteenth century it sank into a condition of ineffective stagnation. Extenuating reasons could, perhaps, be easily found, but it is enough to explain that, as City Companies go, the Musicians’ Company has always been poor ; and this fact may well have impressed the members with a sense of the impossibility of stretching their slender resources to meet

conditions of steadily increasing complexity. However that may be, little was done until the close of the century, and it was not till 1893 that the first move was made in the direction that the Company's recent activities have taken. In that year the foundation of an exhibition for composition at the Guildhall School of Music gave the first faint sign of an awakening of genuine interest in contemporary music, and this act of benevolence was the more significant and hopeful because at the time the Company numbered only about fifty members, of whom the majority were not musicians. Clearly, however, there was in some of them a sense of the necessity for renewed activity, and a few years later—to be exact, in 1892—the more enterprising members formed themselves into a Livery Club, which infused some life into a rather apathetic body, and awoke a new spirit that soon showed itself in a practical fashion. Since 1892 the membership of the Company has grown from fifty to more than one hundred and twenty, and the one exhibition has expanded into a number of similar benefactions designed to encourage merit and promote various forms of musical efficiency. The Musicians' Company now offers four scholarships at the Guildhall

School of Music, presents a silver medal every year to the most distinguished student at the Royal Academy, the Royal College, and the Guildhall School of Music in rotation, awards a similar medal annually to the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall, and contemplates doing the same for the Royal Naval School of Music at Eastney.

In 1904 the Company celebrated its tercentenary by holding a loan exhibition of old music, old instruments, and antiquities. The exhibits had a definitely educative value, apart from their archaic interest, and this was reinforced by a series of explanatory lectures which were subsequently printed and published in a book that forms a concise and luminous history of musical development. In 1905 the Company was responsible for an interesting performance of Campion's *Masque of the Golden Tree* at the Guildhall School of Music ; in the following year it reverted to its former association with the Stationers' Company by reviving at Stationers' Hall the Saint Cecilia Festival that had long been in abeyance ; and in 1907 it presented a Saint Cecilia window to St. Paul's Cathedral and a bust of Orlando Gibbons to Westminster Abbey. These latter activities were valuable in so far as they gave signs of

renewed life, but their interest was mainly antiquarian, and in some cases the generosity which prompted them was individual rather than corporate.

The competitions which the Company has founded are far more useful because far more in sympathy with modern needs. The first of them was held in 1902, and was occasioned by the offer of a fifty-guinea prize for the best Coronation March. Several prizes for competitions in various styles were awarded in 1904, and a definite attempt to stimulate an interest in chamber music and at the same time create a new form of composition was made in 1905, when a prize was offered for a "Phantasy Quartet." A still more important contest took place in 1909, when the Company offered five prizes for original compositions scored for full military band, and in so doing showed what it could do to promote activity in a neglected field of music. The contest provoked 119 entries, and its usefulness was augmented by a public performance of the works of the prize-winners, so that the interest of a wider section of the public was obtained.

In addition to these various forms of enterprise, the Company spends a certain amount of money every year in relieving the wants of poor

students ; but for the moment its best work is unquestionably being done in the promotion of competitions, and it is much to be hoped that when a competition—like that of 1909—meets a definite need and secures a ready response, it may be held at fixed and regular intervals.

Apart from competitions, there is indisputably much opportunity and more need for extending the influence of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. Originally it provided in itself the central regulating authority which is still badly needed and will continue to be needed, so long as proprietary colleges, bogus degrees, and incompetence continue to swell the ranks of those impostors who were called “foreigners” in mediæval times, but may to-day be more appropriately designated as “outsiders.” It would be a counsel of perfection to advise that the Musicians’ Company should revert to its original position and arbitrate in all matters belonging to the art and practice of music ; indeed, in this direction the ground has been cut away from under its feet by the next society with which I have to deal. But there is no apparent reason why it should not take the lead in London, and become, if not a licensing body, at least a body that shall be really representative of musical thought and

energy—amateur as well as professional—in the metropolis. But it is evident that this important gain can only be secured by enlarged membership, and that, whatever qualification is ultimately proposed for would-be liverymen, the prohibitive entrance fee should be abolished. At the present moment a sum of over £40 must be paid on admission to the Livery, and a sum of more than £50 on admission to the Court; and these charges, though admittedly low in comparison with those that obtain in other companies, necessarily bar this Company to the majority of those musicians for whose benefit and protection it was founded. A handsome reduction in fees should lead to a substantial increase in membership and a consequent widening of the Company's sphere of beneficent influence; and this would be a solid advantage far outweighing the loss, if, indeed, the loss were inevitable, of those costly entertainments which under present conditions the members enjoy. Such functions at the best are unnecessary, and in this case, though harmless enough in themselves, are contrary to the best interests of a body which, being poorer than other civic fraternities, is ill-advised to emulate their hospitable customs. They may possibly attract a few wealthy

members. But they are not calculated to impress those men of means who are genuinely and ardently interested in music, and their discontinuance would involve little loss of such support as is really worth having.

The very name of the Company betrays its *raison d'être* and indicates beyond the need for argument that increased musical activity is its first duty. To secure this two reforms are imperatively needed.

Venerable and interesting as is the old association between the Musicians' and the Stationers' Companies, it is unworthy of the former body that it should rely upon the latter for the use of a hall. The Musicians' Company should have a hall of its own to serve as the central head-quarters of metropolitan music lovers; and the main part of the building could be designed for no better purpose than the provision of a moderate-sized concert hall, to be controlled by an authoritative committee in the interests of music and musicians. If of moderate size it would supply a much-felt want, for there is no hall in London which quite takes the place of the old St. James's Hall. The prestige of long and honourable tradition cannot, of course, be replaced immediately; but the seal of such sanction as the Musicians'

Company could give would provide a better substitute than any with which the most enterprising musical firms can endow the buildings they control for commercial purposes. The ideal hall should be of medium size, neither too small for orchestral performances nor too large for private recitals and chamber concerts. Of course it should be easily accessible, and it is not superfluous—in view of existing models—to add that it should be provided with an effective system of ventilation. At the outset it would yield little return as an investment, but it could immediately secure advantages far outweighing any question of profit. Being independent of all such considerations, the controlling committee could frame those necessary regulations which ought to be—but are not—in force at every concert hall. The education of concert audiences has not yet reached finality, and consequently every facility is not at present given to serious lovers of music intent on their own education. But in such a building as I have indicated indiscriminate conversation would be checked, and the more serious annoyance caused by the frequent interruptions of late comers would cease to relax the earnest attention alike of players and listeners. Moreover, the managing committee

would be in a position to regulate the standard of effort : if wisely constituted and representative of every phase of modern thought, it would become a tribunal whose verdict carried all possible weight ; it would protect the public against immature exhibitions of incompetence, and save too ambitious artists from all the painful consequences of uncontrolled zeal ; and when once its policy was known and respected it would place the building it controlled in an authoritative position strong enough to command financial success.

Of course the provision of initial funds for building, and still more for site, presents a grave difficulty ; but increased membership, based on a constitution calculated to attract all classes of professional and amateur musicians, should be able to overcome it. And this brings me to the second of the two reforms needed. At the present moment, though there is much musical thought and energy amongst the Liverymen, there is no guarantee that the Court—the governing body of the Company—shall consist mainly, if not necessarily entirely, of members intimately associated with musical activity. Considerable changes are, therefore, necessary, and it is to be hoped that the Court itself will see the desirability of instituting

such reforms as will secure to Liverymen the certain opportunity of election, but not in the order of such strict seniority as may call to the governing body men of insufficient influence in the musical world. Hitherto the members of the Court have themselves filled vacancies among their number without consulting the Liverymen, who have had no voice at all in the election of the body that governs them. The system may obtain in other companies, but it provides no guarantee that the services of the most useful men shall be secured. More than that, it has often permitted the election to the governing body of men carrying little or no weight in the musical world. Consequently the Court is not really representative of the collective feeling of the whole body, nor is it calculated to make the Company a real living factor in the musical activity of London.

When these reforms are carried out the Company will be in a fair way to fulfil its object by existing for music and musicians : and it will lose nothing in prestige, for it is not as other City companies, amongst which—with the possible exception of the Stationers' Company—it is the only body bound up with the interests of one of the arts.

Clear proof of the need for a central body

really representative of the whole musical profession is furnished by the existence of a society which aims at being what the Musicians' Company once was but has long ceased to be. In 1882 a scheme, first promoted by Mr. James Dawber, of Wigan, took practical shape : for in that year the Society of Professional Musicians was constituted and held its first meeting in Manchester under the presidency of Dr. Henry Hiles. From the first the Society endeavoured to improve the status of the musical profession, and therefore, to guide the public into a right judgment, it issued in 1884 a list of *bona fide* musicians, and in pursuance of the same principle has gone on publishing year by year a full and detailed list of its own members and their individual qualifications. In 1884 ladies were first admitted to membership ; the operations of the Society were extended beyond the original centre of Lancashire, and sections were formed in Yorkshire and the Midlands ; and a scheme of practical and theoretical examinations for testing the work of teachers and the progress of pupils was devised. In the two following years the work of the Society was further enlarged until its operations covered the whole of the country. By this time it was fittingly known

as the "National" Society of Professional Musicians, and this continued to be its official title until it was incorporated under the Board of Trade in 1892. The Society now numbers some two thousand members and embraces twenty-five local sections; but though the term "professional" no longer appears in its title, membership is rigidly and exclusively confined to qualified musicians who have supported themselves as teachers or performers for not less than three years.

The work of the sections cannot here be traced in detail, and it will be sufficient to say that many of them meet once a month, and all at regular, if less frequent, intervals, and that the meetings are marked by lectures, discussions, and concerts as well as sectional business and social intercourse. Beyond this, it is open to every member to attend an annual conference, and his or her convenience is considered by altering the meeting-place year by year. The work done at these conferences is of very great value. For instance, educative papers were read by distinguished authorities on the Training of Teachers, the State of English Music, and the Possibilities of Municipal Music, in 1908; on Musical Terminology, Music and Psychology, and the Scientific Basis of Vocal

Culture, in 1909: on Modern French Music, the Viola, and the Military Band, in 1910. I give these as specimens, because it will be possible to judge, even from such a limited list, of the wide range of subjects brought forward and discussed year by year. It is evident that they serve a double purpose, providing skilled instruction and advice for those to whom they mainly appeal, and tending to widen the limited musical outlook of others whose professional work lies outside the sphere of the subject under discussion.

There is also a practical side to the Conferences, which felicitously stimulate composition and make known by means of public performance deserving works by native composers. Thus programmes of new British works were given at Harrogate in 1908 and at Queen's Hall in 1909. The advantages of the scheme were many; competition was keen, since only approved works were given; the successful composers gained in knowledge and experience by hearing their own works adequately performed; and as the audiences consisted of professionals and included many conductors of musical societies, some solid gains accrued here and there from the subsequent repetition of some of the works brought

forward. The Society has also offered prizes for original compositions, and has brought forward many unfamiliar examples of chamber music at sectional concerts.

The doings of each section, as of the whole body, were chronicled for twenty years in a monthly journal which gave place in 1908 to a periodical report issued—originally at irregular intervals, but now once a month—to members of the Society; and these records contain evidence to show that the Incorporated Society of Musicians is not unmindful of its duty to its poorer members. Though it is not primarily a benevolent society, each section maintains a benevolent fund, and since 1897 the Society has taken over and enlarged the orphanage for the children of musicians that was supported for seventeen years by the private munificence and energy of Miss Helen Kenway. The orphanage suffices at present for twelve girls only, but it is hoped in the immediate future to provide for as many boys.

I have, I hope, said enough to indicate that the Society's record of achievement is no mean one for an association still young and as yet almost in the making; but its high aims entitle it to a much wider recognition than it has yet contrived to secure. Briefly, it exists to pro-

mote the best interests of music, and to increase the knowledge and raise the status of competent professional musicians. It has been felt that the decay of the apprenticeship system has resulted in an unsatisfactory method of assessing musicianship by examination. This question is treated elsewhere, but I may be forgiven for repeating here for the sake of completeness that every degree and diploma does not in itself constitute a sound criterion of attainment, but that there is little else to guide the public in estimating the capacity of a teacher, and that, as long as the public remains ignorant as to the precise value of every combination of letters used as an advertisement, impostors will inevitably be found to flourish on the ignorant and the gullible. The Incorporated Society exists to prevent such fraud and to do away with charlatans ; to afford such numerous opportunities for intercourse as must in time confederate the musicians of the country into a coherent and responsible association ; to provide such carefully graded examinations as may satisfy the parents of pupils that they are receiving full value for their fees ; to protect in this way competent and conscientious teachers from unfair and unskilled competition ; to impose on professional musicians seeking admission to

the Society such tests as will make mere membership a guarantee of sound musicianship; and in these and other various ways to make itself as really representative of the musical, as the Incorporated Law Society is of the legal, profession. It is difficult to see what higher or better aims any society could put before the musicians of the country. Their full realisation would mean the instant decay of professional incompetence, and settle once for all the vexed question of the authoritative recognition and registration of music teachers; for the Society's list of members would provide the best conceivable register. But it is regrettable that after nearly thirty years of existence the Incorporated Society does not number more than two thousand members and that its register does not contain the names of many native musicians of pre-eminent distinction. Such a state of things points to a very definite lack of public spirit in certain directions, if indeed it does not indicate the existence of those cliques which weaken the musical profession by deferring its complete combined organisation. A membership of two thousand cannot make the Society really representative, and if it does not succeed in attracting more members of the profession, it stands in danger of itself becoming a close corporation,

and falling a victim to that very parochial spirit which it was designed to abolish. But it deserves to succeed, for though hampered by many difficulties it is endeavouring to do a good work ; and it is at least free from the exclusiveness of the Musicians' Company. There is no prohibitive entrance fee ; all that is required of a member is a proof of his competence and the payment of a small annual subscription.

It remains to be said that the Society's work, if not thoroughly recognised at home, has met with a measure of appreciation abroad. A representative of the Music Teachers' National Association of America attended the general conference in 1888, and in the following year the Society sent its own secretary on a return visit across the Atlantic.

The work done by these two important organisations—The Musicians' Company and The Incorporated Society—on behalf of British composers is not sufficient to meet all their needs. The burden of publication presses heavily on young musicians, and the Society of British Composers was founded in 1905 to relieve them in this direction. Its aim is to promote the publication and performance of new native works. The first object is attained

by defraying, in whole or in part, the cost of publication of such works as the Society's council approves; by getting the works of members printed and charging them the actual cost price; by advising members in their dealings with publishers; and by supplying to members at reasonable rates such works as are published by the Society. The copyright of every work issued by the Society remains the property of its composer, and members are allowed to transfer to the Society's publishers any works previously published elsewhere, the copyright of which they have retained. In the first four years of its existence the Society published forty-four works, and did its best to make new native works known by performing them at its own meetings and by circulating lists of them in appropriate quarters. The Society issues an annual list of works written by its members, and as the latter comprise practically every British composer of distinction, there is ample justification for the claim that the year-book constitutes a complete catalogue of contemporary British music.

The three societies so far dealt with do not by any means exhaust the number of important associations at present in existence. I cannot pretend to give an exhaustive list,

but shall content myself with a brief account of two more bodies, the one chosen because of the catholicity of its aim, the other because it is representative of a form of activity that is much in the air at present.

The Musical Association was founded in 1874, and incorporated thirty years later. Its meetings are held every month from November to June, and at each meeting a paper is read by an eminent musician (not necessarily a member of the Association) and made the subject of general discussion. As an example of the range of subjects dealt with, I will quote the subjects of the papers brought forward during the session of 1908-9. These, with their authors, were as follows:—"The Music of the Byzantine Liturgy," by Mr. R. R. Terry; "The Effects of Orchestral Colour upon Composition," by Dr. H. P. Allen; "The French Horn," by Mr. D. J. Blaikley; "Jacob Handl," by Dr. E. W. Naylor; "The Harp," by Mr. Alfred Kastner; "Thomas Mace," by Dr. Henry Watson; "The Tympani," by Mr. G. C. Cleather, and "Dr. John Blow," by Dr. W. H. Cummings, the President of the Association. The proceedings of the Society are published annually in book form. It is to be noted that the Association con-

stitutes a London branch of the International Musical Society, and that a fourth part of each issue of the International Society's Monthly Journal and Quarterly Magazine is written in English, presumably for the benefit of the members of the allied Society.

The last few years have witnessed such a growing recognition of the beauty of folk-music, as well as of its influence on native composition and its value on educational work, that it is necessary to include here at least a brief mention of the Folk-Song Society, although its aims are too obvious to need more than a very short notice. The Folk-Song Society was founded in 1898 for the purpose of collecting and preserving by means of publication folk-songs and traditional ballads and tunes. Examples which are approved by a committee of experts are published in the Society's Journal, and meetings are held at frequent intervals for the reading of papers and the performance of folk-music.

Hundreds of unharmonised airs and words of songs have been preserved in the thirteen numbers of the Journal issued up to date, and these have been carefully annotated by expert collectors. The majority of the songs have

been collected in the United Kingdom, and those published in the Journal by no means exhaust the amount of material the Society has in hand. Opinions differ as to the value of the influence which the study of folk-music exerts on contemporary composition, but the historical and scientific value of the subject is beyond dispute. Accordingly it is gratifying, though not surprising, that the work of the Folk-Song Society has impressed many foreign musicians of distinction, and that both Joachim and Grieg were included among its members.

For very different reasons the Royal Society of Musicians has also attracted the notice and support of many eminent foreign composers. It is not actively engaged in the direct promotion of musical effort, but exists for purely benevolent purposes. It was founded in 1738, Handel, Boyce, and Arne being among the original members. Throughout his life Handel's interest in this, as in other benevolent works, took a practical shape; and it was exceptionally fitting that the Royal Society should benefit substantially by the Handel Centenary Commemoration of 1784. From its earliest foundation the Society has remained active in promoting the purposes for

which it was founded; the expenses of administration are carefully kept low; the amount spent every year in relieving distress exceeds £3000.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COMPETITIVE MOVEMENT

Rise of the competitive movement: Stratford and Kendal—The formation of the Central Association—Representative meetings—Stratford—North Middlesex and Hertfordshire—Westmorland—Morecambe—Blackpool—The organisation of competitions—Their influence on schools, country districts, and the public in general—The value of definite aim and open criticism—The training of audiences, especially by combined performances—The usefulness of solo contests—The study of church music—Desirable reforms—The competitive spirit and “pot-hunting”—The National Union of School Orchestras and the claim of music as an essential part of a school curriculum—The National Eisteddfod—Brass Band Contests: music and commerce; the annual Crystal Palace meeting—Need of co-ordination.

EVERY genuine manifestation of energy which aims at music for music's sake is wholly educative and to a certain extent popular. But there are certain movements which aim very definitely at reaching the people, and it is with these that I now propose to deal. Chief among them is that one which results in the numerous competitions now spreading a knowledge of and love for music all over the country.

These competitive meetings are generally known to their organisers and supporters as Festivals, and the title is fully justified by their popular character. They are, however, comparatively new, and the term "festival" has been already appropriated to older institutions. It seems best, therefore, in this connection to avoid the name altogether—not out of disrespect to a movement more important than any other at present in existence, but in order to lessen the risk of confusion. Further, it is necessary to say that the term "competitive meeting" applies here to those gatherings which are designed to educate a whole district or countryside, and embrace a constantly widening sphere of activity. The Brass Band Contests are animated by very similar ideas, and are obviously competitive in their nature, but they deal with one kind of music only and form a class apart, related to, but unfortunately not a part of, the larger movement. The last remark applies also to the Welsh Eisteddfod, the parent of the modern competitive idea, and to a little known movement which is complementary to the competitions in so far as it helps them in their most important work, the promotion and spread of music amongst children.

COMPETITIVE MEETINGS.—Very many musicians have testified to the value of the competitive movement. Sir Hubert Parry, for instance, once wrote that "Competitions are quite among the most hopeful signs of the times in this country. They aim at spreading a knowledge of music in all its branches all over the country." Similarly an active worker in this cause has claimed that it has the power "to riddle England through and through with music," an assertion fully borne out by facts. The supreme importance of the movement lies in the fact that it is essentially popular, educative, and cheap, and is having an astonishing influence upon the young and the hitherto ignorant.

The competitive idea is of course not a new one; in this country it is probably due to the Welsh Eisteddfodau; but in view of the age of those gatherings it is surprising that the seed sown by them should have taken so long to grow. English competitions are certainly less than thirty years old, for the oldest meeting is that of Stratford, which was founded in 1882. At the present moment London is well provided: meetings at Stratford and the People's Palace in the east, Kensington in the west, the Alexandra Palace in the north, Battersea

or some other convenient local centre in the south, cover the whole of the ground. But for many years after the lead taken by Stratford, the rest of the metropolis remained inactive, and the centre of competitive activity shifted to the north.

After 1882 the next important date is 1885, when the Westmorland meeting was originated by Miss Wakefield, whose constant and unwearied activity has given her the right to be called the pioneer of the movement. The Westmorland meeting was small to the point of insignificance at first, but the idea spread fast and far. What is done now at Kendal will be set forth in its proper place. For the present the importance of a gathering, so small at the start that it embraced but one class and attracted only three entries, lies in the amount of imitative rivalry it excited. For all its excellent work, and through no fault of its own, the Stratford and East London meeting, founded by Mr. Curwen, the son of the pioneer of the Tonic Sol-Fa movement, aroused no feelings of emulation. But the example set at Kendal was quickly followed in Lancashire, and gave rise to a movement which has spread over the country and even roused the lethargy of London.

The gradual spread of the movement cannot be traced in detail except at such length as would become monotonous. But a very considerable advance was made in 1904, when the promoters of these gatherings—again at the instigation of Miss Wakefield—formed themselves into a central association to meet annually in London, to promote the spread of the competitive principle and to discuss matters of interest arising out of it. In 1905 the number of competitions in England was 49, and the actual number of individual competitors was estimated at 35,000. In 1909 there were 72 gatherings, attracting at the lowest estimate not less than 60,000 people.

Full details of these 72 gatherings are easily available: they are reported in several musical journals, notably the *Musical Times*, the *School Music Review* and the *Musical Herald*. The more important meetings are also noticed in such of the London papers as show a persistent interest in musical work. It will therefore be sufficient here to refer briefly to a few only, selecting such as give a clear idea of the scope of the work and the magnitude of its influence.

The meeting held at Stratford in March, 1909, attracted 3000 competitors. There were

74 contests : 19 in choral singing, 14 for vocal solos, 26 for instrumental solos, and others in pianoforte accompaniment, theory, harmony, dictation, transposition, sight-reading, and elocution, while classes were also provided for school bands and string orchestras. The North Middlesex and Hertfordshire Competitions at the Alexandra Palace in May, 1909, comprised 50 contests, on much the same lines as those at Stratford, with the addition of classes for instrumental trios and string quartets. One hundred choral societies took part, and there were at least 2500 competitors. The singing of the massed choirs under Mr. Allen Gill at the final concert reached a high level.

The Westmorland meeting of 1908 took up four days, although there were only sixteen contests. The reason for this is that the work is done in the morning ; the afternoons are given up to the rehearsal of music for combined performance, and the evenings are devoted to concerts. These concerts are the distinguishing feature at Kendal, and with a view to keeping them so the contests themselves possess this peculiarity, that in many cases no definite test-piece is set to choirs and choral societies. They have plenty of music to practise for combined performance, and the

adjudicator selects some part of it in the contests. Thus the competitions themselves gain in interest by avoiding monotony, and the choral singers, not knowing what they may be called upon to sing, have an extra inducement to study the concert music. Miss Wakefield feels very strongly, and rightly, that these functions exercise their greatest educative influence on performers and audiences in combined performances: she devised this plan to secure the best possible results. But it is not only in the efforts of local choirs that an object-lesson is provided. For many years the Queen's Hall Orchestra has attended this meeting and done much to stimulate an interest in orchestral music. A specimen programme, that of 1908, shows that the works brought forward were Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony*, Mendelssohn's *E minor Concerto* (soloist, Lady Speyer), Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite*, Brahms's *German Requiem*, and Stanford's *Revenge*, as well as madrigals and part-songs, while object-lessons in solo singing were provided by Miss Marie Brema, Miss Gleeson-White, Mr. Frederic Austin, and Mr. Ben Davies.

Morecambe held its eighteenth annual meeting in May, 1908. There were 165 individual

competitors and 115 choral bodies taking part in 39 contests, which included ear-tests, sight-reading, theory, vocal and string quartets, instrumental trios, string orchestras, and full orchestras ; and the contests were supplemented by three concerts and a church choir festival. A point of particular interest arose in connection with these concerts. It was the wish of Canon Gorton, to whose energy this meeting largely owes its continued and successful existence, to get a big work prepared for combined performance ; and *The Dream of Gerontius* was proposed. But it was found necessary to abandon the idea owing to the difficulty of securing an adequate chorus. In the preface to the programme of the competitions and concerts Canon Gorton wrote : " Paradoxical as it may seem, this difficulty has arisen from the plethora of choral singing in the district." So much was being done that it was impossible to do more ; and as long as the present standard of excellence in part-songs and madrigals is maintained, there is really no need to press forward with undue haste to the introduction of more extensive works.

The genuine vitality of this movement is well shown by the fact that its several manifestations are not cast in a stereotyped mould.

Each of the more important meetings has its own special feature, which, originally designed merely to meet local needs and to provide an outlet for local talent, has managed also to create a genuine demand and a fresh form of activity.

The next, and last, meeting to be considered in detail is that held at Blackpool, which claims to be the largest in the kingdom. Forty-seven contests were held in October, 1908, among them being a novelty in the shape of a class for vocal quintets. There were ninety choirs taking part and upwards of four hundred solo vocalists. The preponderance of solo singing is the feature of the Blackpool meeting; it has been the means of introducing more than one vocalist of promise to the general public. The general standard of attainment, especially in choral work, is very high, and has been testified to from time to time by eminent adjudicators, such as Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Mr. Percy Pitt, Mr. Coleridge-Taylor, Mr. Edward German, Mr. Allen Gill, and Mr. Landon Ronald. Great prominence is given to the performances of combined choirs, and among the works that have been done are Beethoven's *Choral Symphony*, Brahms's *German Requiem*, Parry's *Blest Pair of Sirens*, and Stanford's *Last Post*.

The proper organisation of a competitive meeting is a matter of such moment towards securing its success that it is well to emphasise the essential points. These are two : business-like administration and adequate financial support. The movement must depend largely on subscriptions, for it is idle to expect a new venture to pay its way on entrance fees and "gate money," and the subscription list should represent at least one-third of what the meeting costs. I shall refer in a later chapter to a question which arises out of the difficulty of obtaining subscriptions. At present the difficulty has to be faced and an adequate fund provided by private generosity. Experience proves that subscriptions may be obtained, though not in sufficient quantities to secure complete efficiency. But when this initial difficulty has been settled, it is equally important that the meeting should be managed on sound and practical lines. It must be controlled by a large general committee, representing all classes and shades of opinion, and capable in consequence of influencing the number of entries to a marked extent ; and the actual details of administration must be carried out by a smaller executive body of persons selected not necessarily as musicians, but as

practical business men. Doubtless it is easier to depend on the energy of one enthusiast, but neither energy nor enthusiasm can last for ever if centred in one individual, and the broader basis of a sound executive can alone secure permanent results.

It is now time to justify the claims that have been put forward on behalf of the competitive movement, and explain what it has done and is doing. In the first place, it begins right at the bottom by exerting a very powerful influence in the elementary schools. Though music is prescribed as a school subject, it is one of which many inspectors are ignorant, in which parents as a class take little interest. Anyone in the least acquainted with school life will understand how difficult it has been in these circumstances to galvanise school music into any semblance of vitality, unless there has happened to be a genuine enthusiast on the school staff. This has been by no means invariably the case, for the possession of a recognised musical certificate is not enough to convert a teacher into a practical musician. But given the most favourable conditions possible, it is always difficult to maintain interest in musical work without the stimulus of a definite aim and a public performance,

and this stimulus the competitive movement has supplied. In doing so it has gone far to create a number of enthusiastic and practical teachers: by prescribing the test-pieces it has relieved those whose zeal may be in advance of their knowledge of the troublesome duty of selection, and made the choice of worthless music an impossibility: and it has given the scholars exactly the incentive that they need. Competitions provide something to work for and something to look forward to all the year round, and the interest of the children secures the interest of their parents. It is therefore well that the movement should have enlisted the support of the Board of Education, for now—with the permission of the inspectors and the local authorities—the test-pieces may be practised as part of the school curriculum, and the attendance of active competitors at a contest may be counted as a school attendance.

Closely akin to its effect upon schools is the effect of the movement upon unmusical adults, “unwilling learners who would at first much rather be left to sing nigger songs in unison than learn a chorus from a Bach Cantata.” In such as these the idea of rivalry has created a keen desire to learn, from which has sprung

such progress that an audience of Westmorland rustics has been known to demand the repetition of part of a Beethoven Symphony, and country villages in other parts of England have been transformed into centres of musical energy. In this respect the contests have been specially beneficial in rural districts, where there is naturally much less music than in the towns.

Their effect, however, is by no means confined to the young and the ignorant. They have created an extraordinary amount of activity among classes musically and generally more enlightened, and having created it, have not left it without guidance, nor allowed it to become a monument of misdirected energy. Almost everything possible has been done, especially since the formation of the central association, to create and maintain a high standard of performance and appreciation.

Speaking generally, musical contests begin by establishing a definite aim requiring continuous and serious work for its realisation. The system of full and open criticism by expert adjudicators, who are not content with a bare announcement of their awards, enables performers to estimate the measure of their attainments, gives amateur and inexperienced

conductors every chance of improvement, and brings out unsuspected talent in teachers and taught. Thus the standard of performance is gradually raised over a very wide field, even though the results may not reach a high artistic level at first.

Still more important and penetrating is the effect of the competitive movement on popular taste. There are many people who cannot learn to perform, but there are very few who cannot learn to listen with intelligence. The most valuable asset of a competitive gathering is the audience, and the effect gradually produced upon listeners has been such as to call forth from an unusually experienced judge a remark to the effect that competitions form "not a school of glory, but a school of criticism," and that "the most valuable prizes they offer are the lessons they provide." The principle of selecting only good music is almost universal, and has proved of inestimable service in establishing a sound standard in a country where popular musical instincts have long lacked guidance; and where men otherwise intelligent have shown no power of discriminating between good and bad, but have remained contented with, and almost proud of, their ignorance. The provision of opportunity

to listen under competent guidance has shown clearly enough that audiences easily learn to prefer the good to the bad, and the gain to the cause of music is immeasurable. Consequently music is no longer regarded as a mere amusement, for the public is beginning to take it seriously. The immediate effect is a movement in the direction of musical sanity, which is badly needed to correct the hysterical and emotional elements that have long disfigured both popular and sacred music. Moreover, the future of music in England depends less on the existence of a growing creative school than on the general intelligence of the people at large, for when the general public has learnt to estimate the art at its proper value, the advent of adequate State recognition cannot be long delayed. It is well, therefore, that so much attention is paid to the needs of the audiences by means of the combined performances of extensive works. But the combined performance, which originated in Westmorland, has an effect almost equally great on the performers, especially in country districts where large choral societies do not exist. It enlarges their ideas as to the measure of possible attainment, increases their knowledge of music, and induces them to practise for the

sake of art with no thought of gain or glory. The complementary idea, which also originated in Westmorland, of providing a further non-competitive educative influence deserves to be widely imitated. It is not enough that the Queen's Hall Orchestra should visit Kendal: it should go elsewhere also, for local meetings will probably never reach the same degree of excellence in orchestral work that they have attained in choral singing. Such an object-lesson in another, perhaps a higher, branch of music serves as a tonic and an antidote alike for the local performers and the passive audience.

The competitive movement, in concerning itself mainly with vocal work, has not neglected—at least, is not now neglecting—orchestral effort; and the result of providing better accompaniment is a distinct gain to choral singing. Apart from any outside influence, these contests have raised the choral standard to a marked extent all over the country, and have done what seemed impossible only a few years ago—they have awakened a wide interest in choral singing even in London. This is the first step towards quickening musical life: chorus singing gives a maximum of pleasure with a minimum of trouble. But English people

have been content with it for long enough : it is time that a further step was taken, and it is satisfactory to see that the growth of interest in orchestral playing is beginning to reach the popular competitive meetings.

There still remain one or two points, technical and general, in which the value of the competitive movement should be made clear. The numerous solo contests have done much to discover artists of promise. The Isle of Man association, in particular, has helped several such artists with grants of money, and has been the means of founding a Manx Scholarship of £50 a year at the Royal Academy of Music. The contests for solo singers have had a great and much-needed influence in raising the standard of songs ; it is equally to the good of the singers and the audiences that the inferior drawing-room ballad should be discouraged ; and it is greatly to the credit of the promoters of these functions that they have taken this line, for there have been cases in which badly needed prizes have been offered by publishers on condition that a certain song should be boomed by being set as a test. The movement has also encouraged sight-singing, and that not by any special method. The point is important, for though

the Tonic Sol-fa system achieves surprising results with remarkable speed, it is not in itself completely satisfying, and needs to be supplemented by the more universal notation ; in most of the contests a catholic view has prevailed, and the value of the sight-tests has not been narrowed by unnecessary restrictions.

An important point has also been gained in the direct study of Church music. It is hard to see why there should be serious opposition, as there undoubtedly is, to the practice of allowing church choirs to compete as such in anthems, services, psalms, and hymns. Those who object have yet to consider how completely the end justifies the means. These contests, provided for all choirs, emphasise another feature of special moment—the social value of a meeting in which all classes stand on an equal footing, unhampered by sectarian privileges, and learn not only technical lessons but, in the absence of any appeal against adjudicators' decisions, a love of fair play and the power of being beaten without resentment.

Much as the competitive movement has done, there yet remain points in which improvement is possible, and to these I shall briefly refer, premising that they are well known to the more enlightened promoters of

these functions, and have all been advocated at some time in addresses delivered before the Central Association.

In the first place the combined performance in the form of a final concert ought to be a uniform feature at all meetings ; and it should not be confined, as is sometimes done, to the winning choirs. This practice may have a slight effect in raising the standard of performance and so increasing the educative influence of the concert upon the audience ; but in neglecting the unsuccessful choirs, it omits numbers of singers whose previous efforts deserve recognition as falling but little below the standard of the winners, while it throws away a most potent opportunity for improving those choirs whose work has been manifestly inferior. But it is very necessary that arrangements should always be business-like, that enough time should be allotted to contests, and that this time, once fixed, should never be exceeded ; otherwise the final concert suffers from inadequate rehearsal. A striking instance of mismanagement in this particular occurred at one of last year's meetings. The contests exceeded the scheduled time to such an extent that the amount of time available for rehearsal was reduced to a minimum, and the most diffi-

cult number on the evening's programme was consequently omitted.

Secondly, the movement has a great deal of apathy to overcome. For instance, in the district for which the Windsor competitions are provided there are a thousand schools, but only sixty of them have hitherto entered. Much of this inactivity is due to pure lack of enterprise, and some of it to a rather contemptible disinclination to enter for a contest and run a risk of being defeated. The remedy is to aim at getting at least one musical teacher in each school, and not to frighten intending competitors by setting test-pieces remarkable only for their difficulty. The standard of interpretation may be raised without a corresponding increase of technical intricacy in the music. It is not, however, enough to bring in more of the elementary schools; something must be done to attract the children of the wealthier classes, since it is noticeable that the preparatory and secondary schools have so far shown little inclination to take advantage of the movement.

The strong local feeling developed by competitions should do much towards securing this desirable end. But the parochial spirit which is possibly inevitable in the early stages is capable of further development. In a recent

address before the Central Association Miss Cecilia Hill, the secretary of the Alexandra Palace meeting, outlined a scheme for the widening of metropolitan activity. She showed the desirability of combining the five London competitions into one large contest, thus paving the way for national, imperial, and international meetings. Such a scheme, if found practicable, would make London the centre of the nation's musical activity, and prepare the ground for the establishment of permanent opera; for whatever operatic scheme is ultimately adopted, its influence will inevitably radiate from London as a centre, and the growth of musical interests amongst the metropolitan populace that has been fostered by competitive meetings will undoubtedly succeed in removing the reproach that opera pays in the provinces but not in London—if, that is, the promoters of these meetings will devote serious attention to one more much-needed reform by instituting choral, concerted, and solo contests in operatic music.

An objection to competitions, much stronger than is involved in these comparatively trivial deficiencies, which will undoubtedly be removed as occasion serves, is often urged by well-meaning but misguided people who see nothing but evil in the competitive spirit as such, and

reinforce their arguments by pointing to money prizes as a serious incentive towards "pot-hunting." As regards the latter point, it is to be noted that the movement has done much to discourage a mercenary spirit. Its motive is not commercial, but educative. Many of the prizes are not given in cash: they take the form of medals and certificates or of music up to a definite cash-value. Where money prizes are given they are usually small; a £3 prize among a choir of thirty is not excessive, and though there are exceptions, as at Blackpool, where the prize in the chief choral competition comprises a silver challenge shield and £25 in money, it will usually be found that cash-values are decidedly low. On this ground money prizes may be legitimately defended, though it is impossible to justify them, for the reason sometimes alleged, that they pay expenses. This argument will not hold, for they only afford partial relief to the winners and none to the losers, who deserve even more encouragement. Certainly the best plan is that adopted at Westmorland, where all available money is distributed in grants for expenses to all competing choirs, and prizes consist of medals, certificates, and cups.

If arguments of some weight can be urged

against the usual system of prizes, it is hard to see how they can be maintained with equal cogency against the animating spirit of the whole movement. The competitive instinct is inherent in human nature: it provides the most powerful stimulus possible in the direction of active enterprise, and it is not barred in other fields of activity, intellectual or athletic. It does no harm to genuine learners and does not promote the ultimate success of merely selfish pot-hunters. Moreover, the majority of the contests are choral, and choral bodies are not subject as such to personal vanity, which is easily checked in individual soloists by wise adjudicators; and as there are more losers than winners, the loss, if any, is outweighed by the gain. Again, the work is not all competitive, for the best of it is done in combined performances which foster a corporate spirit; and the display inseparable from public contests is unavoidable, if audiences and rival competitors are to derive the full benefit from the contests.

On all grounds it is not too much to say that the competitive movement has produced results of the utmost moment, and is exercising an influence for good far in excess of any hypothetical tendency towards evil. The most powerful testimony to the good work it has

done is to be found in the standard of attainment which has been reached as the direct result of its influence. Many musicians have borne witness to this aspect of the case, but none more eloquently than Mr. Frederick Corder, who wrote a few years ago :—

“Let the blasé musician in want of a new sensation spend a couple of days at one of these wonderful gatherings and hear not only the best of good music, but music of a class to which he is probably an utter stranger. Beyond this he will have such a surprise as to the possibilities of choral performance as no words of mine can hope to describe. I have heard choirs of mill-girls that made me wonder what was left for the archangels ; I have heard choirs of rough men brought to the fine edge of a solo-quartet of trombones ; but that crowning glory of the north, the well selected mixed choir carefully trained by some local conductor, can touch the heart and compel the unwilling tear in a way that nothing else can. Here is England's strength and beauty : why is not the fact better recognised ?”

THE NATIONAL UNION OF SCHOOL ORCHESTRAS.—In the previous section much has been made of the influence of the competitive movement upon schools, and further stress has been

laid upon the fact that orchestral playing is at last beginning to be recognised in the more important gatherings. As its name implies, the National Union of School Orchestras exists for the furtherance of this double advantage, and may be fittingly regarded as a valuable complement to the larger movement. The Union has been in existence for many years, but only came into prominence some ten years ago, when it introduced a practical system of class-teaching at a Maidstone school. This system is now in active operation at some four thousand schools, and a ready means of testing results is afforded by the annual concerts of the Union. Massed performances were given at the Crystal Palace in 1905 and at the Albert Hall in 1906, and for the last three years a meeting has been held at the Alexandra Palace. These concerts indicate what may be accomplished after a comparatively short period of class-training by children with no previous experience of instrumental playing. The violin parts are undertaken exclusively by children, and the results, though not offered as perfect interpretations of orchestral music, are still surprising. The standard reached last year under the direction of Mr. Allen Gill rose far above the level of mere mechanical correctness and showed much

appreciation of phrasing, true intonation and breadth of expression.

These results fully justify the attempt to give orchestral training to school children wherever it is practicable. The pity is that there should be any schools to which the work of the Union has not penetrated, for it is introducing into the homes of the children and their parents a new element of far-reaching importance. It is, perhaps, impossible to expect that orchestral playing should take its place at present as a recognised school subject, for educational authorities, teachers and ratepayers would grumble at the overloading of the curriculum. But it is highly significant that this movement is growing, a fact which was proved in 1909 when two concerts, employing a junior and a senior orchestra of 1250 performers each, were given for the first time. At present the work is wholly voluntary, depends largely on the encouragement of individual headmasters and headmistresses, and is carried on entirely out of school hours. In no case, however, has it ever been found to interfere with the ordinary school routine: but, on the contrary, masters and mistresses everywhere report that "it has been the means of brightening and invigorating the whole life of the school."

The fact itself is not so surprising as this eloquent recognition of it. The latter affords an additional argument for the inclusion of all musical work as a definite part of school routine, for music deserves a place among those subjects which are included on other than utilitarian grounds. It is a valuable mental gymnastic, trains eye, hand and ear as well as brain, and is easily and fitly supplemented by a course of acoustics sufficient to satisfy the modern demand for science. In the great majority of cases the main reason for the inclusion of science in a school timetable is to give children an insight into the methods of scientific investigation. Were music accorded a higher place in education, acoustics would satisfy this demand, and, being closely connected with practical work, would awaken a deeper interest than is aroused by a detached course of isolated study. Much is heard now of the refining influence of music, but I am convinced that its value as an educational instrument is not recognised as fully as it ought to be, or even as it once was, in this country. The result is disastrous, especially in boys' schools, where the majority of those interested are driven to take private lessons, probably on the pianoforte exclusively,

and are further discouraged by the fact that they are compelled to learn and to practise in the time set apart for rest and exercise. Every one knows that this involves one of two alternatives. Either the boy bows to public opinion and neglects his music, or he pays for his devotion by certain loss of caste and possible detriment to health. In the former case he does not receive a full return for his music fees, and the second involves a loss of solid privileges and advantages which the payment of the ordinary school fees should guarantee against invasion. Some case may be made out for the existing practice in regard to private lessons. But orchestral playing stands on a different footing, since it affords a means in which almost all pupils can join, not merely as individuals but as members of a corporate body. Possibly, then, the time will come when work of such value is held to merit official recognition and encouragement.

Meanwhile the Union is doing its best to foster individual talent by the creation of six annual scholarships leading the way to the great schools of music. It remains for it to increase a sphere of influence which is at present confined to the elementary schools. No preparatory or secondary school was repre-

sented at the last Alexandra Palace gathering, and this though the programme was prefaced by a statement to the effect that "all boys except about two per cent. have a taste for music which is capable of development," made by no less an authority than the headmaster of the leading English Public School.

THE NATIONAL EISTEDDFOD.—The idea which originated English competitions sprang probably from those Welsh gatherings of which the National Eisteddfod is the most important. This function, which dates back intermittently to the seventh century, concerned itself originally with poetry and literature, music being an afterthought as it is still only an adjunct. For many years the Eisteddfod did excellent work and supplied the place of capable teachers and schools of music, which latter are still non-existent in Wales. But though it continues to show extraordinary vitality, it has fallen far below the level reached by its younger rival, the English movement: and the reasons for its comparative failure are easily discoverable.

In the English movement each managing committee is permanent and consequently makes for steady progress; and the existence of a central Association secures a considerable measure of co-ordination in aim and method

between the different meetings. Wales has many gatherings unconnected with the National Eisteddfod, and there is no central controlling body to co-ordinate effort, note the lessons of each year, and strive for continuous advance. Moreover, the national function changes its venue year by year, and is controlled each time by a fresh local committee. Consequently there is no steady spirit of progress, and the work suffers from the arbitrary and capricious requirements of a constant succession of irresponsible authorities. Furthermore, each committee is local in its nature, and each meeting is a commercial venture designed to benefit the town in which it is held. Its value is therefore lessened on the artistic side, for test-pieces are chosen for their power of attracting gate-money, and, as familiar works bring in the largest number of entries, novelties are rarely in demand. In England the choice of music is guided solely by a desire for progress, and is selected by experts. In Wales it is left to a heterogeneous committee, and every chance is given to publishers of bad music to push their productions by offering prizes. Moreover, the commercial spirit is shown by the policy of attracting competitors through the offer of prizes of excessive value.

The actual competitions suffer from a neglect of combined performances, as also from insufficient criticism, which is reserved for those who require it least, those, that is to say, who have successfully passed the preliminary tests : while the competing choirs do not of necessity hear each other's efforts. In addition it is scarcely a matter for surprise that local authorities, being new each year to their responsibilities, should fail in adequate organisation. The 1908 meeting held at Llangollen was a notable instance of maladministration, for though there were 229 entries, only 83 actual appearances were secured. The lesson, a very simple one, was, however, taken to heart in this case ; the imposition of an entrance fee in 1909 did away with absentees and secured proper adherence to the time-table.

To judge from the meetings of the past two years, creative activity in Wales appears to be at a low level. Before the Albert Hall meeting of 1909 a new Welsh work was performed by the Eisteddfod Choir in London and indicated by its slavish adherence to the idiom of Handel and Mendelssohn no more vitality than is usually to be found in works of a frankly "academic" nature. The output of native composition at Llangollen in 1908 was also

decidedly inferior. As to the standard of performance, the National Eisteddfod of 1909 showed clearly that the once deserved reputation of the Welsh for excellence in choral singing is not being maintained. In spite of good voices, the influence of tradition, marked temperament and genuine enthusiasm, the singing, as compared with that of English choirs, fell short in tone, subtlety, and even intonation. Only in one contest was a Welsh choir victorious ; in others success was won by English choirs, notably those from Southport and Willesden ; and the result was rendered more emphatic by the fact that all the adjudicators were Celts. The lack of a progressive spirit in Welsh music needs no further argument ; it would be well if the various Eisteddfodau would combine their aims by the institution of a central controlling authority, and, having done so, get into line with the English movement, to the great advantage of themselves and their rivals.

BRASS BAND CONTESTS.—Another form of the competitive movement which demands detailed notice by reason of its size, is that designed for brass bands. Contests for these organisations are sufficiently numerous to exert a very powerful influence on the general

standard of performance ; and their effect in this direction is heightened by a system of open criticism which, while it does not admit of spoken comments by the adjudicators at the close of each competition, nevertheless ensures their subsequent publication in print. The possible influence of the brass band as an educative factor has been referred to already in the chapter on Municipal Music, where it has been shown that there is a growing section of the public ready to listen with enjoyment to this particular form of music-making. Brass bands meet a genuine demand, and their work, stimulated by contests, has developed to an extent that cannot fail to effect a notable change in public taste.

Yet these contests cannot produce the same deep and far-reaching results as the great competitive meetings. From the very limitations of the instruments employed they are concerned with the exploitation of one, and that not the highest, class of music ; they are restricted almost entirely to one class of performer—the adult male ; and the exceptions, in the shape of contests for boys' bands, are not common enough to allow the movement to stimulate school music to any appreciable extent. But though their sphere of activity is

strictly circumscribed, it must be remembered that they enlist the services of a class little influenced by the larger movement, to which they are therefore in a sense complementary. For the circumstances under which these bands spring into existence are peculiar. They are also well worth considering, because they have an important industrial significance. Brass bands, much more common by the way in the North and the Midlands than in the metropolitan district, are usually formed either by employers of labour or by persons of sufficient importance to command opportunities for influencing employers. Therefore advertisements for bandsmen usually contain the words "work found." The phrase means that the chosen candidate will be provided with a suitable situation on the expressed or implied condition that the band committee's responsibility in the matter will be ended by subsequent dismissal for incompetence or misconduct. Thus the existence of the band creates in working men an active interest in music; and musical proficiency, acquiring a direct economic value, acts as a powerful inducement to commercial industry, efficiency, and good conduct. Here is a double gain of an uncommon character. The bandsman obtains a livelihood,

and the employer, in securing better service, is himself induced to recognise the value of musical work and to promote its development. These facts are in themselves sufficient to justify the growth of this specific form of musical activity.

The extent of the movement, which has called into existence a large amount of periodical literature, can be indicated by a few readily accessible facts and figures. I have found contests to the number of twenty or thirty a month advertised in the leading bandsmen's journals; and though the activity ceases in the winter months, it is safe to estimate the number of annual contests at present in existence at two hundred.

The climax of the year's competitive work is reached in the Brass Band Contest and Festival held annually at the end of September at the Crystal Palace. The competitions here are safeguarded from abuse by very stringent rules. No player may take part in them unless he has been for three months a genuine member of his band. He must live in the place or district from which the band is recruited, and may not play in two bands or on two instruments during the meeting. Thus the element of professionalism is avoided, and

the contests are confined, except in the case of conductors, to genuine amateurs. There is no appeal against adjudicators' decisions, and frivolous protests against other bands or bandsmen are guarded against by a rule requiring a deposit of two guineas on the part of the protesting band, which sum is returned if the protest is upheld by the committee.

At the tenth annual gathering held at the Crystal Palace in September, 1909, there were nine contests provided, and the meeting was brought to a close by a combined performance on the Handel orchestra. The competing bands, which numbered 134, were made up of some 5000 bandsmen, of whom Yorkshire supplied the greatest number, though a fair proportion came from Lancashire, from the Midlands, and from the London district. Significant facts which illustrate the interest aroused by the movement are that one band came from Cornwall and another from Scotland, while the number of visitors coming from all parts of the country was reckoned at 60,000. Many medals and prizes were awarded to the winners, the most important—the National Challenge Trophy—being valued at 1000 guineas. But the cash prizes were not excessive, considering the age and

status of the competitors and the importance of the contests: their value was exactly £265.

This involves a point of some importance, for the charge of encouraging "pot-hunting" is frequently brought against brass band contests, and with some show of reason, when a famous band like the "Besses-o-th'-Barn" advertises itself as the winner of prizes to the value of £10,000. But it must be remembered that the prizes are not necessarily, or even mainly, given in cash, and that when such is the case a large part of the money goes to the general fund administered by the managers. Working expenses are high, for uniforms must be provided, fares paid, and instruments kept in repair, so that when the general fund has taken its share, the amount remaining for distribution among individual bandsmen is small.

The standard of performance reached last year at the Crystal Palace was surprisingly high. The playing of the massed bands was remarkable for breadth and subtlety, but it was eclipsed by that of a single band, the champion of the previous year, whose power of obtaining soft and delicate effects was astonishing. As to the general level of the music affected by brass bands, the *British*

Bandsman—the leading metropolitan journal of the movement—takes pride in, and some credit for, a steady and continuous improvement. It points out that “Beethoven, Wagner, Schumann, Chopin, and Tchaikovsky are now greatly appreciated, whereas a few years ago only popular music in the lowest sense of the term was billed.” This is a very gratifying statement, but unfortunately none of the composers mentioned, with the exception of Wagner, were drawn upon at the last Crystal Palace meeting. Moreover the article, from which the above quotation is taken, proceeds to deprecate with much significance the still prevalent fashion of performing hackneyed and inferior productions, and it is certain that arrangements and selections predominate to an unfortunate extent over original music.

Whatever improvements have been effected, much still remains to be done in this direction ; but the reason for the present prevalence of a rather mediocre standard does not lie with the promoters of the contests. Their aims are laudably serious, and they are advancing an excellent work. The fact is that the brass band has been too long regarded as an agreeable adjunct to the park, the pier, and the promenade, a mere accessory to fair-weather

enjoyment, instead of a legitimate embodiment of serious musical energy. Consequently there is not at present available a sufficient quantity of good music. The fault may have lain in the past with the public, but there is now every reason to believe that the public will respond if musicians will lead the way. The brass band movement offers an excellent opportunity to young native composers. If they will be quick to take advantage of it, they will advance the cause of music and incidentally improve their own prospects. For they will find an immediate market for their music, and, gaining experience and the confidence that comes with success, materially increase their chances of ultimately creating symphonic works of permanent vitality.

Further, it is well to add that something might be done in the direction of co-ordinating the two competitive movements. The larger meetings of the kind already described make practically no provision for brass bands. An isolated contest is provided here and there—one for brass quartets was included in the last South London competition—but such cases are rare. It has been a weakness of the larger movement that it has dealt chiefly with vocal music. This was perhaps inevitable at first.

Now, however, when increasing attention is happily being paid to orchestral music, it would be well to enlarge the scope of the contests and provide classes for brass bands. This would necessitate the provision of prizes large enough to secure entries, and it must be admitted that the condition involves a serious difficulty to a movement which has consistently studied to keep its prizes low. But the effort would be worth making. It would influence a new class of performer, enlarge the limited musical interest of the bandsmen, and perhaps induce some of the more eager to take up the study of stringed instruments. The last-named contingency is eminently desirable ; nor is it beyond the limits of probability, for it has already been pointed out that the Crystal Palace and the Bournemouth orchestras were originally developed from brass bands.

CHAPTER IX

OPERA

Existence of an English public for opera—Rise of opera in Italy and France—Its general acceptance abroad—Its early history in England—An exotic for two centuries—The fashion for Italian and its effects; opera a luxury; contempt for English language; discouragement of English composers and distrust of English musicians—Early operatic ventures and the reasons for their failure: the want of a public; exclusive schemes; premature building operations—Modern English activity; winter seasons; Mr. Thomas Beecham; the Covent Garden Syndicate; the Carl Rosa Opera Company; the Moody-Manners Opera Company—Native works—What is wanted.

IN spite of many omissions, the preceding chapters, I hope, fulfil their object by showing that the undisputed growth of musical activity in this country has been accompanied by a corresponding increase in public interest and appreciation. To-day the artistic presentment of some form of music is within the reach of every section of the public, and, though isolated enterprises have met with partial failure here and there, in the main the public has responded readily enough to most of its opportunities. Opera alone,

though regarded in other countries as the highest form of musical art, has not yet been brought uniformly and permanently within the reach of the English people ; but there are many indications that its provision is widely desired. It is, indeed, unreasonable to suppose that a public which will support other forms of music will not listen to this. The fallacy of the view has been repeatedly exposed in the provinces and less frequently in London ; and it would be perfectly possible to show by facts and figures how the admittedly limited knowledge of English people does not hinder their acceptance of a worthy operatic enterprise, and how, when their support is refused, the inadequacy of the performance is the strongest cause of its failure. Nevertheless, in spite of the plans and promises with which we are constantly beguiled, enterprises remain comparatively rare, and there are few impresarios whose courage is expressed in a practical form. Yet their cautiousness is not entirely valueless, inasmuch as it serves to emphasise the need for subvention and the desirability of a definite scheme based on State support.

For the English public has been content hitherto to regard opera as the most expensive of all forms of entertainment ; and though this

is certainly the case, we have apathetically left it at that, even when we have not adopted such forms of production as have materially increased its costliness. We have never, as a nation, realised its educative value, nor afforded it a fair measure of the support that has been generously given in other directions. For the moment, however, these points are somewhat out of place ; but a mere mention of them will accentuate the contrast between this and other countries to whose ready appreciation I propose now to call attention. In doing so, I shall go back far enough to show that opera is one of the oldest art-forms in existence. It is, indeed, practically coeval with the drama, for in its essence it dates back to the time of Æschylus and Sophocles, in whose plays the choruses were sung and the dialogues musically declaimed.

The credit of its revival—not the least interesting nor the least permanent result of the Renaissance, belongs to Italy—and was due to the attempt made at the close of the sixteenth century by Peri and Caccini to reproduce the methods of the Athenian theatre. The following extract from the preface to Vitali's *Aretusa* (1620)—already quoted in my book, *The Operatic Problem*—makes this clear,

and is interesting as showing the aims of the pioneers and the amount of recognition they met with :—

“This style of work is a new style, born a few years ago at Florence of the noble intelligence of Messer Ottavio Rinuccini, who, dearly beloved of the Muses and gifted with especial talent for the expression of passions, would have it that the power of music allied to poetry tended rather to gather fresh strength from the combination than to suffer diminution in consequence. He spoke of it to Signor Jacopo Corsi, Mæcenas of every merit and most enlightened amateur of music, proving that the mission of music united to poetry should be not to smother words with noises, but to help those words to a more eloquent expression of passion. Signor Corsi sent to Signor Jacopo Peri and Signor Giulio Caccini, eminent professors of singing and counterpoint, and after having discussed the subject they came to the conclusion that they had found the means for reaching the desired goal. Nor were they mistaken. It is in this new musical style that the fable of *Dafne* to the poem of Signor Ottavio Rinuccini was composed and performed in Florence at Signor Jacopo Corsi's in the presence of the illustrious Cardinal del Monte

and their most serene Highnesses the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Tuscany. The work pleased them so much that they were absolutely bewildered. This style of music acquired a still greater number of fresh beauties in *Euridice*, a work by the same authors, and then in *Ariadne* by Signor Claudio Monteverde, to-day Maestro di Capella at Venice."

Italy, then, led the way, and was as quick to adopt and support, as subsequently to develop and cultivate, the new form ; but it did not long enjoy an operatic monopoly. The new ideas began presently to spread throughout Europe, and the next important departure was the authoritative establishment of opera in France. This took place in 1669 ; and the letters-patent granted by Louis XIV to Pierre Perrin in that year set forth clearly the King's wish that his subjects "getting accustomed to the taste of music would be led almost unconsciously to perfect themselves in this, the most liberal of the arts." Here is to be seen not only a far-sighted sense of the educative value of music generally, but also a wise recognition of the gradual means by which alone the new art could make its way ; and powerful patronage as well as definite support was given to Perrin, in the expressed hope that the in-

fluence of opera might be brought to bear on the people "*en notre bonne ville de Paris et autres de nostre royaume.*" It is true that Perrin's enterprise was shortlived, but it sowed the seed. Lully entered into his labours, and, by judicious modification of the Italian model and a skilful incorporation of the native ballet, he practically created a form of French opera of permanent vitality.

The taste for opera, thus established in Italy and France, soon spread further until it reached Germany, Austria, Spain, Russia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Greece. In each of these countries opera has been supported and subsidised. The sources of the subsidies have varied, and there have been many changes in the conditions on which monetary aid is granted; but the aim, like that of Louis XIV, has consistently been the benefit of the masses. England alone among the great nations of Europe has held aloof, resisted or failed to feel the claims of opera, and refused it public recognition. Yet even in England its value has not been totally ignored, and many efforts at its establishment have been made from time to time. They have failed, however, because their promoters did not profit by the lessons taught elsewhere. These lessons I have set

out already in *The Operatic Problem*, and I shall not deal with them again; but I shall refer briefly to the history of opera in this country, consider the causes which weakened previous enterprises, and, by indicating the amount of operatic activity at present before the English public, attempt to show the growing measure of appreciation with which it is regarded.

Unfortunately the history of opera in England demands but little notice, since for nearly two hundred years it deals chiefly with a series of efforts to induce an exotic to grow on native soil. But before they began, there was a brief period in which it seemed likely that a strong native school of opera would spring from two popular and essentially British forms of entertainment. The miracle plays supplied the first impulse to creative effort, and this was reinforced by the masques which formed the favourite amusement of the English in the time of the Stuarts. These masques combined into one whole the requisite elements of dramatic action, scenery, dancing, and music. They may, therefore, legitimately be termed precursors of opera; and one of them, *The Masque of Lethe*, written by Ben Jonson and composed by Nicholas Lanier, claims with

good reason the title of the first English opera, since its dialogue was entirely in recitative. Lanieri died in 1666, and the influence of the masques may be inferred from the fact that ten years before his death—thirteen years, that is to say, before Perrin began his work in France—the term “opera” was in use in this country; for in 1656 Davenant sought and obtained permission to give operatic performances in London. The work of the pioneers, however, is mainly of importance in so far as it prepared the way for that of Henry Purcell, whose *Dido and Æneas*, produced about 1680, still retains its vitality.

The cessation of native effort, which followed the death of Purcell in 1695, is commonly explained by the bald statement that he left no successor to carry on his work. The explanation is extraordinarily inadequate, but it is difficult on any other assumption to account for the succeeding years of barrenness. The facts, at any rate, whatever the reasons may have been, admit of no dispute. In 1710 the opera *Almahide*, attributed to Buononcini, was given in London by Italian artists: and the production of Handel's *Rinaldo* in 1711 began the period that set Italian opera on the footing of fashionable favour which has hardly yet

entirely disappeared. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries more than five hundred Italian operas were produced in London, and the folly of this exotic cult is well shown by the fact that very few of them have survived to the present day. They may consequently be disregarded, while attention is more profitably fixed on the surprising results of a policy which, for all its tenacious longevity, was too irrational to escape ultimate failure.

Few phenomena in the history of Art are more astonishing or more ridiculous than the long-continued effort to make English-speaking audiences appreciate performances in a language they did not understand. It is reasonable enough, perhaps, that Italian opera should be given in Italian, though there is some significance in the ludicrous fact that on its first introduction into this country it used to be performed by a mixed company of Italians and Englishmen, each singing in his own language. But the fashion for Italian, once it had taken root, developed vigorously, in spite of the ridicule of writers from Addison onwards, until it spread to works of different schools and nationalities. Moreover, it proved astonishingly stubborn. Not till 1889 was a French opera, Gounod's *Romeo et Juliette*, given at

Covent Garden in French, this being the first time that any but an Italian work was performed there in its native tongue: not till 1892 did the introduction of German opera by Sir Augustus Harris cause the disappearance of the word "Italian" from the title of the Covent Garden Opera House, and even in that year the production of a French work—Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète*—was marred by an incongruous Italian chorus: and not till 1895, after productions in the two preceding seasons of Stanford's *Veiled Prophet* and Cowen's *Signa* in Italian, did an English opera—Cowen's *Harold*—attain the distinction of being given in its proper tongue. The inevitable result has been that grand opera has never exercised its true appeal nor obtained a hold on the mass of the public: it has become, instead, the luxury of the rich, and has been degraded from a serious art into a fashionable amusement.

But the long-continued ascendancy of Italian has had other far-reaching effects. In the first place, it has given rise to a widespread idea that English is essentially unmusical and a vehicle unfit for the expression of sentiment. So far as this meant that existing translations of foreign works were unfit for use, much

might—perhaps still may—be urged in support of the view ; but on general grounds it cannot be maintained. Nobody pretends that spoken English cannot do justice to sentiment, and there is no special mystery attaching to the interpretation of grand opera sufficient to exclude a language which has been found suitable for detached lyrics, part-songs, the service of the Church, the cantata, and the oratorio. The most that can be said against it is that its employment considerably hampers the popular foreign artist, who may, however, be confidently relied upon to overcome his disabilities as soon as he realises that he is seriously expected to do so. Moreover, if opera in English would lead to a partial exclusion of foreigners, it would at least secure for the music which is sung some of that attention which is now bestowed upon the singers, while it would give to native artists a fairer field for competing in public favour with those who are imported from abroad.

Again, by failing to attract the great majority of Englishmen, who know no language but their own, the production of opera in a foreign tongue has not encouraged English composers to devote their attention to a form of art which has inevitably failed to win popular support.

A second Purcell might have withstood the influence of Handel and changed the course of events: but there was no one strong enough to stem the tide of fashion. Accordingly, for years such composers as Arne, Storace, Arnold, and Bishop neglected almost entirely the severest form of grand opera and worked in a different field, the way to which was originally opened out by the successful production of the *Beggar's Opera* in 1727. The vogue of this distinctive type of "ballad opera" was short-lived: it lasted hardly more than thirty years: but it set the fashion for light opera; and those who worked in the latter form helped to establish the school which reached its highest artistic expression in the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, and, exercising through them an almost immeasurable influence, did much to predispose the modern British public towards the reception of grand opera. This ultimate outcome of their work was not, of course, apparent to Arne and his successors. Nor is it more than parenthetically significant. The important fact is that they neglected grand opera: and though subsequent English works like *The Bohemian Girl*, *Maritana*, and *The Lily of Killarney* achieved a lasting popularity, the fashion for Italian militated against the success of Balfe,

Wallace, and Benedict, discouraging them as it has discouraged their successors right up to the present day.

But the strange and curious perversity which boycotted the English language did more than deter native effort. For many years it helped to spread the belief that every province of music was better left to foreigners. The consequent distrust of the claims of English music produced a natural result. English music fell for long enough into the position popularly assigned to it, so that it is only in the last few years that the native musician has begun to come into his own. The operatic field has suffered more than any other and the growth of public interest during the last five-and-twenty years has scarcely reached it yet. Only last summer, when the English artists who form the Moody-Manners Opera Company were drawing crowded houses to a London theatre, it was wisely remarked that metropolitan music-lovers had long withheld their support from such enterprises from a natural disinclination to cultivate a taste with no certain means for securing its continuous gratification. Fortunately the attitude of the public is changing, and success is beginning to come: but in London at least it is humiliatingly recent. For

in London there has been for long enough no sufficient public for opera, and this fact goes far, though not indeed quite all the way, to account for the failure of successive enterprises.

Several times during the nineteenth century the continued neglect of opera aroused the disgust of ardent but misguided enthusiasts, and drove them into the exploitation of premature schemes. It would be unjust to class them all as utter failures, for they accomplished much invaluable spade-work: but their plans came to nothing permanent, because they came too soon, and the public was not ready to receive them. Other causes, of course, contributed to their defeat, and it will be well to see what these were in each case.

The first important effort was put forward by Samuel James Arnold, who opened the Lyceum Theatre as an English Opera House in 1809. His scheme deserved success, for it was not exclusive in its nature, and Arnold was wise enough to see the necessity for producing foreign operas in English. But he was ahead of his time, and suffered the usual fate of those whose ideas are too far in advance of the public intelligence.

Efforts to establish English Opera were made at Drury Lane in the second quarter of

the nineteenth century ; by the Pyne-Harrison English Opera Company in 1856 ; and again at Covent Garden in 1865. These enterprises failed as they were bound to do, and, in so far as they were insular and exclusive, as they deserved to do. It is to be hoped that even the existence of a wider public would not save a restricted enterprise to-day ; for while too much encouragement cannot be given to a venture which exists for the production of opera in English, one which attempts to take its stand solely on English opera does not merit success, at least if it arrogates to itself a position of national pre-eminence. No such idea animates the management of opera houses abroad. At the Grand Opera House of Paris, for instance, a certain amount of new native work must be produced every year, but State-support is not accorded to French Opera alone. A similar catholicity should inspire the presumably imminent English venture. We want a native school certainly : but we want it to be healthy, and not debilitated by parochial restrictions.

Two more ventures which remain to be noticed will supply further warning object lessons. In 1875, Colonel Mapleson set on foot a scheme for the erection of an elaborate National Opera House in London. The

building was designed and begun, and a sum of £100,000 was actually spent upon it, when it was discovered that there was no money available for the roof. Accordingly it was sold for one-third of its cost, and subsequently sold again for an insignificant sum which represented the bare value of the bricks. Nothing remains of it now but the foundations, and the very site is unknown to most Londoners to-day. Finally there came the erection of the Royal English Opera House in 1891, followed by the speedy disaster which overtook it and converted the building into a music-hall.

Colonel Mapleson had prepared a careful and comprehensive scheme for the employment of his building, but the promoters of the Royal English Opera House had neglected to provide for the future. The folly of attempting to run such a venture without a repertory was soon apparent. When *Ivanhoe* ceased to attract, there was no English work ready to take its place, and none was prepared to follow the French opera which succeeded it. Hence the costly opera house is now given over to opera's worst enemy, the variety entertainment—a fate almost as bad in the interests of music as that which befell its predecessor. But the two failures teach a still more pregnant

lesson and testify fully to the futility of inaugurating any scheme for the establishment of opera in this country by building. This is beginning at the top. The Opera House should come last, when its erection is justified by a carefully planned scheme, including subvention, subscription, and, above all, the provision of an eager and interested public. The last requisite exists, as I have tried to show, in constantly increasing numbers; but the other details will require careful consideration and final settlement before the expenditure of any money upon building.

Among modern operatic organisations the Covent Garden Syndicate demands the first mention; but before dealing with it I wish to refer briefly to two successful seasons of grand opera in English held at Covent Garden out of the regular season. The second of these at the beginning of 1909 was a complete success. It was devoted almost exclusively to Wagner, though Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* and Dr. Naylor's *The Angelus* were also given. This short season doubtless did much in the way of training the public: but the point to which I wish to call attention is that a splendid educative opportunity was missed through neglecting to recruit the chorus from the great metro-

politan schools of music. The occasion offered a unique chance for increasing the very limited operatic experience offered by the schools themselves; its value would have been incalculable, and should not be overlooked on subsequent occasions, if only wise counsels are allowed to ensure the repetition of the experiment. Its discontinuance in 1910 was not felt because Mr. Thomas Beecham provided a short season of grand opera : produced for the first time in England Strauss's *Elektra* and Delius's *Village Romeo and Juliet* : and gave Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, Debussy's *L'Enfant Prodigue* and, with other more familiar works, Sullivan's *Ivanhoe*. Apart from the great attractiveness of so varied a repertory, this season drove home the lesson of its predecessors, the desirability of operatic performances at Covent Garden in the winter months. It served to enhance the reputation of some hitherto comparatively unknown artists and brought Mr. Beecham's name prominently before the public. The season, however, will be memorable chiefly because Dr. Richard Strauss was present to conduct performances of his latest opera for the first time in this country.

The Covent Garden Syndicate was formed on the death of Sir Augustus Harris in 1892.

It has done something to encourage native effort, but its services in this direction are not so significant as its successful efforts to avoid the universal use of Italian, and to give each opera in its proper language. This is unquestionably the ideal; and yet there is something to be said against it. The fact is recognised abroad. Opera in Germany is sung in German, in France in French: and in these countries its appeal is consequently intelligible and universal. To recognise an insular dislike to confess ignorance is to pander to national snobbishness and to retard the growth of popular appreciation. Hence the plan is not wholly wise; but it is far preferable to the consistent employment of a language which few Englishmen understand, and its adoption by the Covent Garden authorities is certainly praiseworthy in so far as it involves heavy additional expense in the engagement and training of chorus singers.

The Syndicate also deserves great credit, apart from the merit of the performances it gives, for its influence on public taste in the production of novelties. Of last year's new works *Pelléas et Mélisande* did not score any decided success, but *Samson et Dalila* was given nine times and *Louise* five times. The

previous familiarity of the former work in the concert room may have gone far to account for its unusual success, but the instant popularity of *Louise* indicated a marked growth on the part of the audiences in the power of readily appreciating a novelty. I am not concerned to offer any opinion upon the artistic merits or demerits of the work, but desire merely to point out that the public made up its mind instantly, and, having done so, backed its opinion.

Other points of importance about the recent work of the Syndicate are the comparatively successful revival of old-fashioned Italian works, due to the questionably valuable star system, and the increasing number of English singers employed. The last point brings into prominence a fact which critics of the Syndicate are apt to overlook, namely, that Covent Garden is not a National Opera House. If it were, it would be reasonable to expect the employment of English singers in bulk, instead of the occasional engagement of the few who have studied and won their laurels abroad; it would be admissible to censure the management for their encouragement of foreign artists and their neglect of English composers, and the frequent sneer at the fashionable audience intent on individual singers and the display of diamonds,

if not laudable, would at least gain in point. These reproaches might be levelled at a national institution, State-supported and existing for the encouragement of art, the exploitation of native talent and the education of the masses; but they may not fitly be directed against a Limited Liability Company. Benevolence does not enter into the scheme of the Syndicate, which exists for the purpose of making money and paying dividends. Its inner history and constitution are beside the question; the point is that it is a commercial venture, having to satisfy its shareholders, and is not in any sense a philanthropic movement designed to educate the ignorant, and therefore to be blamed for not providing them with cheaper facilities to listen. If members of the public criticise the Syndicate on this basis, or members of the Syndicate make such claims on their own behalf, the value of the work done at Covent Garden is discounted by the ineptitude of the argument.

The work of the Carl Rosa Opera Company has been very different and far more educative, if of less artistic merit. The Company has been before the public since 1871, and has consistently encouraged both English opera and opera in English. As regards the latter the Company has been the means of introducing

Wagner's *Flying Dutchman*, *Rienzi*, *Lohengrin*, and *Siegfried*; Verdi's *Aïda* and *La Forza del Destino*; Puccini's *La Bohème*; Bizet's *Carmen*; Gounod's *Cinq Mars*; Ambroise Thomas's *Mignon*; at the moment of writing it is preparing an English version of Goldmark's *Queen of Sheba*, and has announced the first English performance of the whole of *The Ring* ever given in the provinces. The support accorded to native works, begun in 1876, was steadily maintained for a considerable period. Cowen's *Pauline* and *Thorgrim*; Goring Thomas's *Esmeralda* and *Nadeshda*; Stanford's *Canterbury Pilgrims*; Corder's *Nordisa*; Mackenzie's *Colomba* and *Troubadour*; and Hamish McCunn's *Jennie Deans* and *Diarmid* all owe their first performance to the Carl Rosa Company, for which some of them were expressly composed. A season of four weeks given at Covent Garden in the autumn of 1909 was remarkable for the encouraging measure of appreciation shown by the public. For the performance of *Tannhäuser* at the end of the first week it was necessary to increase the seating accommodation of the house, and every numbered seat was booked several days in advance. Ordinary theatre prices were charged.

The Moody-Manners Opera Companies have done invaluable service in popularising grand opera in English. Mr. Charles Manners and Miss Fanny Moody control two companies, the "A" company of 130 performers being the largest touring body ever seen in Great Britain.* All productions are in English, and the success they have met with proves the existence of a public, which they have done much to create. Previous seasons resulted in losses, but recent ventures at the Lyric Theatre have found the public more and more responsive, so that—to give an isolated fact in proof—at the performance of the *Mastersingers* on the final day of the last London season every seat in the house was taken. In the provinces too Mr. Manners meets with consistent appreciation. A notable instance is that of Middlesbrough, where prices of admission range from three shillings down to fourpence, and the house is usually packed. At Middlesbrough such old favourites as *Maritana* pay the best, but the fact that this is not invariably the case elsewhere was proved a few years ago at Sheffield, and the incident is sufficiently instructive to be set out in detail.

* Since this was written Mr. Manners has announced his intention of retiring from operatic management.

Sheffield music-lovers, desiring more modern works to be given, appealed to Mr. Manners in 1904 to vary his repertory, and an agreement was made on the following terms. A guarantee fund was established and a sum of £950 fixed to cover the expenses of a week's season; the credit balance, if any, was to be given to the Sheffield University Fund, but any deficit was to be made good by Mr. Manners. In 1904 and 1906 *Figaro*, *Tannhäuser*, *Siegfried*, *Tristan*, *The Valkyrie*, *Lohengrin*, *The Flying Dutchman*, *Carmen*, *Mignon*, *Philemon and Baucis*, *Faust*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Eugene Onegin* were given, ordinary theatre prices were charged for admission, and the profits amounted to nearly £500. In 1907 a similar programme was put forward, and the newly formed Sheffield Grand Opera Society co-operated in the chorus department. The profits fell to £30 owing to perfectly explicable causes, of which the waning enthusiasm as to the charitable object—on this occasion local hospitals—was the most significant. Since 1907 there has been no theatre available, and the scheme is temporarily in abeyance; but, while it lasted, it enabled Sheffield music-lovers to prove their point and demonstrate the existence among them of a genuine desire for modern opera.

Mr. Manners has sedulously fostered native talent and has produced McAlpin's *Cross and Crescent*, Nicholas Gatty's *Grey Steel and Duke or Devil*, Stanford's *Much Ado about Nothing*, Hermann Lohr's *Sarennia*, and Alick Maclean's *Petruccio* and *Maitre Seiler*. He has also performed in English a large number of foreign works, including *Madame Butterfly*, *La Tosca*, *Rienzi*, and *The Mastersingers*; and he has recently added to his repertory an English version of Saint-Saëns's *Samson and Delilah*.

The period which has seen the rise and progress of these two operatic associations, the Carl Rosa and Moody-Manners Companies, has witnessed also a considerable revival of creative operatic activity on the part of native composers. Most of the works produced in recent years have already been mentioned incidentally, but there remain a certain number not previously referred to. These include Sir Charles Stanford's *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Savonarola*, and *Shamus O'Brien*, of which the last scored a distinct success in London, while the first has been given in Germany. Mr. Isidore de Lara's *Sanga*, English at least as far as the music goes, was favourably received in Paris at the end of 1908; Miss Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers*, more or less familiar

in the concert-room, was produced with conspicuous success in London last summer; and Mr. Holbrooke's *Pierrot and Pierrette* was given at the Afternoon Theatre in the autumn. It can scarcely be doubted that there are many works by native musicians still unheard, and it is probable that some of them will shortly be produced. Meanwhile, enough has been said to show that though native operas may not, in fact do not, exist in sufficiently large numbers to justify the establishment of a national scheme for all-British opera, there are yet many of them awaiting and deserving repeated production.

Having already put forward my own views as to the problem of national opera in my earlier work I shall not repeat them in detail. The main points to be insisted on are official recognition, a fair proportion at least of performances in English, and a comprehensive repertory, including all schools and nationalities. To reach the people at large the prices must be low, and for that reason, as well as for the provision of a pension fund for the army of workers that national opera will maintain, it is probable that official recognition will need to be reinforced by financial subsidies. Mr. Mannes has worked so hard that he has a

right to be heard on this point ; and his opinion is that, given official recognition, grand opera can be made to pay at prices varying from one to six shillings without a subsidy. Unquestionably this is the ideal, since a subsidy is apt to bring patronage in its train and impose arbitrary limits on a scheme which should be catholic and comprehensive. But this is not inevitable, and it is to be remembered that opera is expensive and the risks of producing novelties are very great. The Sheffield enterprise was only undertaken on terms which provided a guarantee fund to minimise the chances of financial failure. So that it is desirable that any scheme put forward should include a subsidy to facilitate managerial enterprise in the production of new and native works, and to guarantee the provision of a pension fund for artists, mechanics, and administrative officials. The mere fact of the existence of the subsidy would create an invaluable feeling of security. There is a public for opera, but whether it is large enough to allow of the subsidy remaining untouched, can only be determined by experience : and I hope I may be pardoned for insisting once more on the essential fact that, until experience has shown the amount of public support available for any national

operatic enterprise, it will be folly to waste money on the last essential requisite, the building.

If we are to have national opera established in this country, it can only be done, as Louis XIV saw in France, by "getting the people accustomed to the taste of music." The production of native work, the employment of native artists, the building of a suitable opera-house will follow as a necessary corollary ; but the grant of a subsidy either from imperial or local sources can be reasonably expected only if the primary object of the scheme be the "perfecting of the masses in this, the most liberal of the Arts."

CHAPTER X

THE OUTLOOK

Need of a large conclusion—Some suggested reforms—Inadequate support of music as compared with painting—Enquiry before reform.

THE facts set out so far have been confined intentionally to this country, but the legitimate inferences to which they point should not be weakened by the omission of what is being done to-day in Scotland, Ireland, and the Colonies. To relate this in detail would be to tell again a twice-told tale, since the musical energy of the metropolis is not only paralleled in the provinces, but is being felt, developed, and imitated all over the Empire. Already the hopeful nature of the case has been sufficiently dwelt upon, and it seems best to end an honest enquiry, not with vague flourishes of congratulation, but with such a statement of imperfections as shall reach a large conclusion and point the way to helpful and comprehensive reforms.

I have tried to show how at home every form of musical activity, except opera, is flourishing and vigorous, while even the case for national opera is getting gradually stronger with the growth of public knowledge and responsiveness. But though it is certainly the widest and possibly the highest form of musical art, and though for these and other reasons already disclosed it offers the strongest claims to official support, the State-establishment of opera is only a part of the largest possible conclusion that can be reached ; for if the State is to interfere with music at all, there should be no limit—in scope if not in detail—to the measure of its control. There are many manifestations of musical energy in this country ; but the several forms of activity, whether due to private or to corporate enterprise, are isolated and independent, and many of them are suffering from a lack of adequate support. Only a suitable degree of control by a central authority can increase their individual efficiency and co-ordinate the separate parts into an inter-related and completely effective whole ; and as to national opera, its establishment will be hastened and assured if the State once assumes its responsibilities to the entire field of music.

But before dealing with the large question

of reforms that must come from without, there are several points to consider which can only be changed from within. One of the most powerful extraneous influences on contemporary musical thought is to be found in current musical criticism. To some extent the critic directs the judgment even of those who hear new works and new artists, and his verdict is the most important criterion the bulk of the public can adopt. Consequently the members of the public have a right to expect in musical criticism the best possible assistance in forming their isolated judgments and general habits of musical thought. Therefore the charge of producing hurried and ill-considered work, which has been levelled against modern criticism, carries much weight with it at first sight. Yet a little consideration shows that hasty criticism is inevitable under existing conditions, when both performers and audiences demand immediate notice. Probably no one would be so pleased as the critic himself if he could reserve judgment until time had been given for mature deliberation; but the conditions of modern journalism forbid delay, and the public, having created the demand, has reason to be thankful that it gets better measure than might have been expected.

If there is some force in this objection, there is less ground for another reproach which has been levelled at musical criticism, namely that the same critic frequently writes for more than one paper. Now no critic does this for any length of time unless his work is proved to be good ; and when this is the case, it is permissible to argue that the more papers he writes for the better. Those who see, or think they see, evil in the system, may console themselves with the thought that the necessity for haste prevents the spread of pluralism. Work which is done against time cannot be multiplied indefinitely, and it is hard to see why the views expressed, for instance, in a London paper should not be repeated to an entirely different set of readers in the provinces.

Yet there are, I am persuaded, some points in which criticism as a whole is capable of improvement. The obvious function of the critic is to point out the faults and merits in new works and in performances, and by his blame or praise to guide alike artists, audiences, and the general public. In other words, his work is educative, and for this reason it should be temperate in tone and give reasons for the faith which inspires it. Only so can it gain

the confidence of musicians and correct the judgment of audiences. On behalf of the latter it is better for the critic to presuppose too little knowledge rather than too much. Few members of the public have his opportunities, and it is safe to assume, even in the case of a familiar work, that very many members of any given audience approach it as novices. Good criticism comes down to the level of the most ignorant and emphasises its lessons incessantly in the knowledge that only by continued repetition can its end be secured.

As to intemperance of tone in criticism, it is at least a fault in the right direction that this error is more common on the side of praise than of blame. But there are not wanting occasional signs of prejudice for or against certain schools or individuals, occasional indications of bias in definite directions. I am not referring to personal tastes and legitimate preferences, but only to such deliberate policy as seems to me in danger of defeating its own end. Here and there, I think, it is possible to detect unmistakable signs of a desire to advance at all costs an individual or a school. The attitude is most common when British music or British artists are under consideration, and it commands sympathy as being at

least excusable, if not in some sort laudable. But there is a limit to the value of encouragement: and when once a deliberate policy of this or any other nature is discernible, the critic's worth is impaired, his claim to impartiality is invalidated, and the measure of his influence is weakened even more in the case of musicians than of the general public.

I have yet to urge another internal reform, more important perhaps than the last, because it concerns other than professed music-lovers. The work of the critic appeals, or should appeal, to the whole of the musical world, but it scarcely touches the mass of the public, who are not usually credited with great interest in serious music. The idea is, I believe, a mistaken one, but there is some justification for it; there is no denying the existence of a large number of people to whom what they vaguely term "classical music" is a thing to be avoided. The view they hold is based on a misapprehension, a failure to recognise the slender nature of the difference—after all, only one of degree—which divides the popular from the serious school. Consequently, while they anxiously avoid the latter, they are sometimes surprised to find themselves listening with unstudied and unexpected pleasure to such an

example of it as makes a definite emotional appeal, and calls for no very serious effort of attention. Anyone may test this for himself by noting the involuntary interest, and, still more, the voluntary applause, which awaits any departure from the normal trivialities of the restaurant band.

It is not, however, with bands of this class that I am concerned. The circumstances of their environment at present prevent them from constituting a serious factor in musical progress, though, as a matter of plain fact, some of them are tentatively trying to improve their programmes. But theatre orchestras stand on an entirely different footing. They appeal to a wider public, and, except in the case of genuinely incidental music, have fewer counter-attractions to contend against. With great opportunities before them, they have every reason to avoid the constant repetition of nauseously familiar excerpts from ephemeral comic operas, and should play their part in teaching those who ignorantly regard serious music with disfavour how easily the faculty of appreciation may be acquired.

Of course it is not to be expected that theatrical managers should improve their music from a purely benevolent desire to

enlighten the public in a subject not properly within their province. But it is obviously to their interest to make the whole of their entertainment as attractive as possible ; and, fortunately, the case for reform can easily be argued because it has been put to the test of actual experience. At the end of 1908 a notable innovation was introduced at a metropolitan theatre, where serious examples of chamber music displaced the inferior programmes of convention. The experiment, certainly, was soon discontinued for reasons which are immaterial ; but, while it lasted, it was successful enough to explode the antiquated idea that the public only cares for rubbish, and it provided an attraction almost as great as the entertainment put forward on the stage.

No case, then, can be made out against the improvement of theatre music ; and apart from its effect upon the public at large there is a great deal to be said for it. Moreover, there is no reason why it should cause increased expenditure. The experiment just referred to can be repeated at a great saving of expense ; and if it be considered inadvisable to substitute chamber for orchestral music as a general rule, the latter can be reformed at no additional

outlay. Improvement in the music will entail a corresponding improvement in the status of the musicians, and, once that is secured, competent players from the music schools will readily avail themselves of openings bringing valuable experience and constant work at regular and adequate salaries.

It may be urged, I know, that the public has not invariably responded when managers have tried to do their duty in this matter; that the substitution of chamber music was too striking a change to escape observation; but that the provision of specially written orchestral *entr'actes*, appropriate to the action of the play and designed as a commentary upon it, has been entirely disregarded. But this is a common fate of initial reform, and is only another argument in favour of a desirable alteration. Long used to rubbish, the public naturally expects nothing else, and overlooks isolated attempts at improvement; but it will not disregard them for long, and will soon learn to resent a return to the worse, when the better has been generally provided.

Reform from without may be directed to the removal of abuses, to the securing of increased efficiency in existing institutions, and to the provision of what is still lacking in the nation's

musical opportunities. In no one of these directions can I pretend to completeness in suggestion, nor would it be advisable for any individual to take upon himself so much responsibility. All I can attempt is to give a few instances, enough to emphasise the need for authoritative intervention.

As to existing deficiencies, I have already laboured at sufficient length the case for opera in English at popular prices, the lack of which gives to this country an unenviable distinction amongst the nations of Europe. I shall, accordingly, be content here merely to point out how the provision of a building—an ultimate feature of any official scheme—cannot be resisted on the ground that the State has already built lavishly in the interests of music. Museums and art galleries in plenty have been erected at the public cost, but I cannot find an instance of a Government applying public funds to the building of an opera-house, a concert-hall or a school of music, except in the two cases noted in a previous chapter.

Turning now to preventable abuses, I shall omit such well-known instances as the bogus degree and the proprietary college, and deal with two only, of which the former is so easily remediable that its existence would seem to be

due to ignorance of the hardships it causes, while the latter involves a serious evil demanding strong repression.

Obviously the majority of those who seek to gain musical degrees or diplomas are earnest students to whom the question of expense is an urgent matter. In such circumstances candidates, who present themselves for examination after the payment of a heavy fee, have at least the right to expect from the examining body something more instructive than a bare announcement of awards and failures. The examinations in these cases are qualifying, not competitive, and the payment of the fee should secure at the very least the publication of the examiners' marks in a form accessible to each candidate. The competitive movement derives its chief value from the lessons it provides in the shape of full criticism of each competitor or competing body by the adjudicators. In this case the lesson given, though highly valuable, is not indispensable, but represents something in the nature of a luxury. It is not so in the case of examinations, where each candidate's future livelihood may be supposed to depend largely on his success or failure. If he succeeds, the reasons for the result are comparatively immaterial; but if he fails he has

every right to expect from the examiners such information as shall serve to guide his future efforts. In some cases, such as the examinations for the Licentiateship of the Royal Academy and the Associateship of the Royal College, the payment of a small fee of half a crown secures the examiners' marks to candidates who have already paid five guineas for the privilege of being examined. But at the older Universities no guarantee is given that candidates whose exercises do not satisfy the examiners shall be informed of the reasons for their failure. Hence a candidate, who has followed the official syllabus to the best of his ability and has been rejected, has no means of discovering and correcting his own weaknesses, but must choose between the two alternatives of working in the dark or seeking his necessary qualification elsewhere. The Union of Graduates in Music is much concerned with the suppression of sham degrees, and no one can quarrel with their activity in this matter; it might, however, profit them to turn their attention also to a reform which would strengthen their own position by increasing their numbers.

Again, qualified students who seek to win public approval on the concert platform are

practically obliged under present conditions to put themselves in the hands of concert agents. In their interests, as in those of the numerous well-conducted agencies at present in existence, it is highly desirable that steps should be taken to protect young and ignorant musicians from fraudulent middlemen, who trade on the weakness of young artists, too inexperienced to protect themselves, and too timid or too poor to seek redress when they have been victimised. Such agencies have sprung up and flourished from time to time. I will give a concrete instance of their methods, premising first that the middleman in question has now disappeared from the ranks of concert agents. In the case I have in mind a young singer was offered an engagement at a concert at which a well-known pianist was to appear. She could have no fee, as the concert was to be given in a charitable cause; but it was suggested that she should buy tickets to the value of £5 and sell them at a profit to her friends. Fortunately the singer sought advice, and was persuaded to call upon the pianist, who told her that she had not undertaken to appear at the concert in question, and had, indeed, never heard of it. In this case no harm was done, but it is idle to suppose that all intended vic-

tims escaped so easily. Possibly the registration of teachers, if it ever comes, will bring with it as a necessary corollary the registration of agents, and so protect those of deserved reputation from unfair competition.

Mention of the registration of teachers, a reform badly needed but long delayed, leads inevitably to the question of their proper training. Since the intervention of the State in general education, the application of scientific principles to the art of teaching has become a question of such moment that a course of training is now a practical necessity for teachers in all schools to which Government aid is given; and it has already been pointed out how the question affects the teaching of music in public elementary schools. Hitherto schools of music have been under no obligation to meddle with the subject, although statistics go to show that eighty per cent. of those students who look to music as a means of support ultimately become teachers. The students themselves are scarcely to be blamed for their apathy, since it is the natural ambition of each one at the outset of his career to win distinction as a performer; but a strong obligation rests upon the staff of the schools, to whom the real outlook for their pupils is more entirely clear.

Accordingly there has sprung up during the last ten years a growing distrust of a system under which students are taught only how to perform, and a paper in the Art of Teaching is now included in the examinations for the Teacher's Diploma at the leading metropolitan schools of music. But the Royal Manchester College of Music has gone further than the imposition of a written test, and has recently instituted a practical course for teachers. The object of this special training is "to provide lectures and discussions on the principles of teaching, to apply these principles to the teaching of music," and "to provide regular specimen lessons followed by criticism and discussion." The curriculum has been drawn up by Dr. Walter Carroll, to whose private enterprise in this field is due the institution of the College training class. The course provides for complete instruction in the principles of education and their application to the teaching of music, and differs from similar attempts elsewhere in that it is compulsory and not optional; hence it prevents the possibility of the granting of a Teacher's Diploma to any student who has not had some practical experience, under supervision, of the art of teaching. The importance of a scientific under-

standing of this art is now being recognised in other fields of education. It is just as important that the great majority of music teachers, who have to deal with children and adults of very limited musical development, should understand how to appreciate the difficulties of learners, how to apply their own knowledge effectively, and how best to stimulate and guide the growing musical instincts of their pupils. The State has recognised its responsibilities in general education; in the cause of music it has few duties of such pressing importance as to see that the care of those under training is entrusted only to teachers of recognised competence.

So far I have dealt with instances in which State control is desirable; but control naturally implies support, and the amount of financial aid which music has hitherto received from the State is inadequate and entirely disproportionate to its importance and influence. I have already described the good work done in the two Government schools of music at Hounslow and Eastney, and have not withheld appreciation of the recent improvements official intervention has secured in the music of the Army and Navy. In the same way I have tried to show what a change for the better is

being effected in the musical achievements of the elementary and continuation schools. These facts need no more elaboration, and they provide strong arguments for the further extension of the principle involved.

As far as the actual Government grants are concerned, the generous scale of those allotted to the military and naval schools of music may be conceded without affecting the main issue—that elsewhere music is not as well supported as it ought to be. Neither is the argument weakened by an acknowledgment of the expenditure on music in the wide field of education. The outlay necessary for the maintenance of an up-to-date musical reference library at the British Museum is more than paralleled in other departments: and the sums spent in the elementary and other schools form an item by no means excessive in the general educational total. These things are beside the mark, and the point is made clear when music is considered less as an educational subject than as a branch of art.

It is a truism that the term “art” is used in this country in a very restricted sense, which may explain—without justifying—the fact that painting is liberally subsidised, while music, as a branch of art, is practically starved. The

sums voted by Parliament for 1909-1910 in support of the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Wallace Collection amounted to £24,132. Music received only £1000, in grants of £500 each to the Royal Academy and the Royal College. Of course it is permissible to argue that the larger sum represents a legitimate investment, but the attitude of politicians is not qualified by any such view. In October, 1909, speeches were made by Mr. Harcourt and Mr. Balfour at the opening of the Loan Exhibition in aid of the National Gallery Fund. Neither of them took a commercial view of the matter; but each urged the claims of painting as an art, and each hinted at an ultimate increase in the amount of support it might expect to receive. Mr. Harcourt anticipated a time when art would cease to be included among luxuries and "be regarded as an essential necessity of decent life," when the authorities of the National Gallery would be "enabled even better in the future than in the past to secure and to save for the nation some of those priceless treasures which, unhappily, in recent times had shown such a tendency to migrate from our shores." Mr. Balfour went further in the direction of practical suggestion, the burden of his utter-

ances being concerned with the definite obligation of the State to intervene. "I think it is possible," he said, "that the time may come when the Government of this country will have to decide whether it will have to increase the amount which the State itself is asked to give in this country, when we see what the State is already giving in one or two continental countries. But it is not for me to anticipate the policy of this or any other Government, though I feel that the question is one which cannot be shirked."

If the State ever increases its support to Art, it should enlarge also its conception of what the term embraces. But for the present we are concerned rather with facts than with probabilities: so it is well to recall how the Treasury was recently able to find £10,000 for the purchase of a picture by Holbein. It is perhaps beside the mark to say that Holbein was a mediæval German, and that living British artists and composers depend for support and encouragement on such forms of private enterprise as the Patron's Fund. But it is not irrelevant to point out that only private enterprise secures to the people, at prices which they can afford, the opportunity of becoming acquainted with operatic masterpieces

as great and worthy in one sphere as Holbein's picture is in another. In fact, the disproportion cannot be justified, and the injustice to music is rendered more acute by the fact that it makes a far wider appeal than its more favoured rival. For while painting puts forward its full measure of attraction only to the cultivated eye, almost everybody who can speak can learn to sing, and the proportion of human beings who cannot learn to listen with intelligence and enjoyment is so small that it may almost be disregarded.

In the absence of Government grants, other than the two insignificant sums I have quoted, too much is left to municipal initiative; and yet the opportunities municipal bodies have of promoting musical energy are unnecessarily restricted. Here, for example, is a case in proof.

At the majority of the competitive meetings the committees are unable to make any monetary return to competitors who come from a distance at much expense and, possibly, more discomfort. Lack of funds even prevents their being decently entertained during their stay, and makes it impossible to offer such prizes as will ensure their further attendance. In these circumstances the committee might reasonably

look for municipal aid, especially when it is remembered that the holding of a competition attracts many visitors and benefits the town in a large number of ways. Many corporations are quite alive to their obligations in this matter, and would be willing to contribute, if their corporate powers allowed them to do so. The Corporation of Blackpool has such power, and uses it so well that the Blackpool meeting is perhaps more successful than any of its rivals; but in most cases the municipal authorities have no right to devote any of their funds to this purpose. It is, therefore, only right to expect such changes as would allow of a reasonable amount of public money being devoted to the furtherance of a movement more important in its educative influence than any other in the whole field of modern music.

I have now attempted to show both how much is done and, less completely, how much yet remains to be done for music in this country; and in doing so I have tried to state a strong case for State-control and support. But State intervention must be preceded by regular enquiry, and I can reach no weightier conclusion than an appeal for thorough investigation.

As to the method of enquiry, what is wanted is not a House of Commons Committee, nor even a joint Committee of Lords and Commons, for the question calls for expert opinion; and as music enters so much into the problem of education, there is no better method of examining into the questions it presents than that of a departmental committee appointed by the Board of Education. There is plenty of evidence to be collected and sifted by a body of experts representing the Treasury, the Education Authorities, Municipal bodies, and practical musicians of all grades. Such enquiry has preceded all really successful attempts at reform and legislation, and cannot be dispensed with in the case of music. For music makes an appeal as unlimited as the strength of its educative influence: as a sphere of activity it provides employment and support, in most cases hardly adequate, to thousands of composers, teachers, and performers; and it has called into existence a large number of subsidiary trades and occupations.

I have attempted to indicate in some measure the extent of this widespread energy, but where so much is done there must be an inevitable loss of efficiency in the absence of

central control. Native composers and native artists demand support ; for we have a strong British school of composition, and its existence—thanks mainly to the appreciation which Sir Edward Elgar has commanded abroad from the early tribute of Richard Strauss to the recent success of his *Symphony in Rome*—is being recognised in other countries than our own. The methods of the schools require revision, that each grade may play into the hands of the others, and music hold as honourable a place in secondary as it now holds in elementary schools. The methods of professional training need to be directed to two main ends—the provision of competent teachers and the supply of artists qualified to support and benefit by the presumably imminent institution of national opera. There is urgent need of funds to endow scholarships which shall remove promising students from the dangers of private patronage, ensure not only their competent training but also a means of livelihood during the years of pupilage, and send them out, when fully equipped, ready and able to stand upon their own feet. But behind all specific defects there lies a wide and ever-growing amount of activity which can be augmented in scope and influence only when

its various phases are co-ordinated to definite ends and reasonably guaranteed against inefficiency by wise counsels and authoritative support.

THE END

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